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EXPLORING THE RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A
COMPREHENSIVE LIVING-LEARNING PROGRAM
AND INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE:
A NARRATIVE INQUIRY CASE STUDY

A Dissertation Presented

by

Christopher P. Marquart

to

The Faculty of the Graduate College

of

The University of Vermont

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education
Specializing in Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

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ABSTRACT

Over the past 50 years, living-learning programs (LLPs) have emerged as a dynamic curricular innovation in higher education. These programs are residually based, seeking to seamlessly integrate the classroom and residence hall environments and blur the traditional boundaries between the academic and residential experiences for students (Kuh, 1996; Inkelas & Soldner, 2012). However, efforts to implement LLPs at some campuses have been met with resistance; this is not surprising, as institutions of higher education are often charged in part with preserving cultural and social norms, therefore making them naturally resistant to change (Shapiro & Levine, 1999). One of the most common challenges facing colleges and universities that seek change is a tendency for institutional culture dynamics to be potentially divisive and foster internal conflict (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Such conflict impacts faculty, students, and administrative subcultures. Institutional partnerships that can overcome divisive cultural dynamics have the potential to greatly enhance the campus climate (Nash et al., 2016).

This qualitative research study asks the overarching question, “How does institutional culture influence the creation and development of an LLP and, in turn, can an LLP reciprocally shape institutional culture?”

This case study examines the internal conflict and cultural implications related to the founding of a comprehensive first-year residential college system at St. Lawrence University – a small, private liberal arts institution in the Northeast. Utilizing Kuh’s & Whitt’s (1988) Framework for Analyzing Culture in Higher Education, as well as Schein’s (2004) Conceptual Model for Managed Culture Change, this study collected data through historical document analysis, as well as narrative inquiry interviews focusing on the artifacts, values, assumptions, and beliefs of the campus community. In-depth interviews were conducted with faculty and administrators who played key roles in the foundational years of this LLP, as well as with faculty who opposed the program. The findings of this study demonstrate how preexisting cultural conditions heavily influenced the creation and development of the LLP. This study also identifies the ways in which several deeply entrenched cultural conditions changed, indicating this comprehensive LLP fostered a relational capacity to facilitate institutional culture change.

DEDICATION

To Wesley and Colby

The two of you are my inspiration.

At some point in each of your lives, you will have to ask yourselves the question,

“What does success look like for me?”

I hope this endeavor, and the story it tells, proves to be helpful in some small way for each of you as you seek to find your answers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This long and rewarding journey would not have happened without the love and support of my family. I would especially like to thank you, Emily, as you are my rock. I could not have done this without your unyielding support. We made it. I would also like to thank my parents, and Bob and Cathy, for all of your efforts and sacrifices throughout the years.

I would like to acknowledge Larry Casey and Coach John Casserly, two very special people from a much earlier time in my life. Each of you saw something in me at a time when not many others did. Your faith empowered me, shaped my path in life, and influenced my worldview in immeasurable ways. While much time has passed, please know that I would not have even considered starting this journey were it not for both of you and all you have done for me. Thank you.

This effort would not have been possible without the assistance and support of my amazing colleagues from St. Lawrence. I owe a huge debt of gratitude and thanks to President Bill Fox and Dean Val Lehr for consenting to this study. Jenny Hansen deserves all of the credit for rounding up an impressive group of interview participants; I have no doubt someone else will one day write a history of her career accomplishments. I would also like to recognize the help of Debbie Bishop, Elaine White, Mark McMurray, and Paul Haggett for digging up primary source documents for me, as well as the support

of Joe Tolliver and the entire Residence Life team for enabling me the flexibility to balance work commitments with this research effort.

Thank you to all of my interview participants for volunteering your time and sharing your memories. This proved to be a story of transformation with passion for students and learning at its core. I hope I was able to tell it in a holistic and accurate way that also captures the essence of how special this period of time was for so many of you.

Finally, I would like to thank my advisor, Deb Hunter, for her warm support and encouragement from day one. You supported me since before I was even accepted into UVM, and have been there for me every step of the way. To my defense committee, Vijay Kanagala, Jay Garvey, and Stuart Whitney, as well as Judith Aiken; each of you have been so supportive and helpful throughout this process and I could not have done it without you. Thank you!

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

On December 12, 1986, a memo containing the following announcement was released by Dr. G. Andrew Rembert, Dean of Academic Affairs, on behalf of the faculty at St. Lawrence University:

In a series of seven meetings this fall, the St. Lawrence faculty has completed its present work on curriculum and calendar reform. The specific resolutions, each one approved by a large majority, are listed below. In essence, the faculty adopted a new Freshman Program... These faculty resolutions raise various implementation questions... We basically hope to offer a pilot version of the Freshman Program as an elective in 1987-88, and move to full implementation for all entering students in Fall 1988. (p. 1)

A list of eight specific resolutions from an ad hoc committee chaired by Dean Rembert followed, detailing how this initiative would be a “two-semester, multi-disciplinary freshman program which will have the purpose of promoting a habit of active intellectual inquiry among first year students and introducing them to significant human questions;” another fundamental component was “the freshman program [would] be taught within the residential college system” (Rembert, 1986, p. 2). This decision by the faculty represented a fundamental shift in how the University would transition first-year students into the academic and residential community of the university. This program would have broad implications not only on the academic curriculum, but also on the residential environment and pre-existing relational dynamics between faculty, students, and administrators at the university. In other words, the proposed “Freshman Program” was poised to have a transformational impact on the institutional culture of St. Lawrence University.

1.1. Statement of Problem

One of the most common, yet complex challenges facing colleges and universities across the United States is a historically-rooted tendency for institutional culture dynamics to be potentially divisive and foster inherent conflict (Kuh & Whit, 1988). The most visible form of cultural conflict typically exists between students and the academy, as is clearly evident when analyzing the history of traditional “campus life” in America. It is a history that has long been dominated by what Horowitz (1987) identifies as “college men” and “college women” subcultures, often resulting in a student focus on vibrant social life, grade obsession, and a lack of intellectual adventure. A student culture dominated by anti-intellectualism is at odds with the values, assumptions and beliefs of faculty and administration (Horowitz, 1987). Despite striving to achieve a shared institutional mission, faculty and administrators at many colleges and universities often struggle to establish effective collaborate efforts successfully blending classroom learning with the residential experience. This cultural conflict is rooted in the philosophical and structural disconnects between academic and residential life on campus, with the result being faculty and administration forming adversarial relationships (Doyle, 2004). Furthermore, similar culturally-based conflict can also exist between different subcultures within the faculty (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Bergquist, 1992). Each of these conflicting institutional culture dynamics can negatively impact the student experience and inhibit learning.

Students face a number of defining challenges during their first year in college. These challenges can be overcome through the personal relationships they develop with

faculty and other members of the campus community (Chambliss & Takacs, 2014). It is important for institutions to change in ways that provide a more seamless living-learning experience, thereby enabling students to successfully transition into college life.

Institutional culture has a significant impact on these relationships, as it influences practically all aspects of college life (Kuh & Whit, 1988). Specifically, institutional culture has an incredibly deep and reciprocal impact in shaping the history, artifacts, fundamental values, basic assumptions, and beliefs shared by a campus community (Tierney, 1988; Kuh & Whitt, 1988). If cultural conflicts exist between faculty and administrators, or if the organizational structure inhibits relationship-building opportunities between academic and residential life on campus, the natural pathways students need to build critical relationships may be impeded.

One potential solution to the problem of divisive institutional culture dynamics being compounded by structural disconnects of academic and residential life are residentially based living-learning programs (LLPs). As explained by Kuh (1996), LLPs integrate the classroom and residence hall environments, blurring the traditional boundaries between the classroom and co-curricular experience. This integrated residential experience has the capability of facilitating a cohesive cultural bridge between faculty, students, and administrators (Levin Laufgraben, O'Connor, & Williams, 2007). When faculty and administration are able to partner in ways that overcome divisive cultural dynamics, opportunities are created to better educate the whole student and greatly enhance the campus climate (Nash et al., 2016). Unfortunately, institutions of higher education are well-known for being naturally resistant to change; colleges and

universities identify strongly with their own cultural heritage and are often charged in part by society to preserve cultural and social norms (Shapiro & Levine, 1999). Not surprisingly, efforts to implement LLPs at some campuses have been met with resistance (Watts, 1999). This case study seeks to provide a thick description of one such implementation effort that was met with resistance, illuminate the cultural implications of the conflict, and identify ways in which the LLP fostered cultural change.

1.2. Significance of Study

The value of a college degree – and the role higher education plays in preparing students to be well-educated, actively engaged citizens – is more important than ever in today’s culturally diverse democratic society. Learning occurs both inside and outside of the classroom with each playing an important role in providing a holistic educational experience (Kuh, 1996). Unfortunately, the fact remains many colleges and universities in the United States struggle to foster learning environments successfully blending academic and residential life and engaging students in holistic ways (Nash, 2016). This dynamic perpetuates potentially divisive institutional culture dynamics between faculty, students, and administrators (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). It also inhibits institutions of higher education from cultivating college graduates who are fully prepared for tomorrow’s real world challenges, while at the same time negatively impacting student retention efforts. Since this study seeks to understand the cultural implications related to the founding and implementation of a comprehensive LLP, its findings may positively contribute to efforts of addressing these systemic problems within higher education.

College plays a critical role in the economic health of our nation, as well as the mental and moral health of the individual; at its core it must facilitate the study and transmission of knowledge to the next generation (Delbanco, 2012). America's shift from an industrial economy to a knowledge-based economy has created an increased need for a well-educated workforce possessing strong written and oral communication skills. Recent developments both globally and nationally have transformed our world into a more complex, interconnected community, requiring the need for critical thinkers who can understand and approach problems from multiple perspectives and successfully promote cultural pluralism (Guarasci & Cornwell, 1997). A recent study conducted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) found that 96% of employers "agreed that, regardless of their chosen field of study, all students should have experiences in college that teach them how to solve problems with people whose views are different from their own" (AACU, 2015, p. 4). Students who participate in LLPs are best prepared for this quickly-evolving and diverse world, as research shows they not only find meaning with regard to obtaining social and academic support, yet are also more likely to engage in multicultural experiences and become leaders (Spanierman et al., 2013). As confirmed by the memorandum issued by Dean Rembert in the fall of 1986, the faculty at St. Lawrence University shared these same concerns. In response, they proposed and implemented the First-Year Program, a comprehensive LLP that sought to change student culture in positive ways – both in and out of the classroom – so learning could become more interdisciplinary and meaningful.

In order to fully capitalize on a collegiate experience promoting personal growth, critical thinking, and cultural pluralism, it is essential for students to feel supported by their campus community, develop a sense of belonging, and actually graduate. According to the U.S. Department of Education's (2015) National Center for Education Statistics most recent findings, only 59% of undergraduate students who began their pursuit of a bachelor's degree in 2007 at a 4-year institution graduated by 2013, or within six years. Furthermore, a recent study conducted by the JED Foundation (2015) found students who feel emotionally unprepared for college are more likely to report poor academic performance and have a negative college experience – and that 60% of incoming first-year students reported they did not feel emotionally prepared for college. Significant research exists demonstrating the effectiveness of LLPs on a broad spectrum of student outcomes that can help strengthen the student experience and reduce attrition. Astin (1977) demonstrated how positive experiences in the residence halls lead to an increase in student involvement with co-curricular activities, academic involvement, and faculty-student interactions, all of which foster a higher level of individual student satisfaction. Contemporary research also shows how students who are part of LLPs perceive “a culture [promoting] seamless learning, a scholarly environment, and an ethos of relatedness among faculty, staff, and peers” (Wawrzynski, Jessup-Anger, Stolz, Helman, Beaulieu, 2009, p. 138). Two separate national studies on LLPs have found they facilitate the social and academic transition to college, enhance individual student self-confidence in college success, increase levels of co-curricular engagement, and create a stronger sense of belonging (Inkelas & Associates, 2008; Mayhew et al., 2016).

Finally, the focus of this case study is significant as it also seeks to describe the evolving institutional culture conditions and how they ultimately shaped interpersonal relationships at St. Lawrence. Its findings may provide educational leaders with insight into better navigating complex and challenging cultural conflict. Every college and university in the United States faces its own set of complex, multifaceted challenges; they are not only influenced by powerful external factors such as demographics, economics, and politics, yet are also challenged and shaped by internal forces (Tierney, 1988). How educational leaders interpret and understand these challenges is a key factor in how successful their efforts for organizational change end up being. As explained by Kuh & Whitt (1988), it is also beneficial to analyze student behavior through the lens of culture, which allows student actions often perceived as negative to be “viewed as an interpretive framework for understanding and appreciating events and actions in colleges and universities rather than a mechanism to influence or control behavior” (p. 3). This is an important consideration, as there exist many documented cases throughout history of institutions failing to “control” student behavior in response to perceived negative student behavior – with rebellion, student protests, or violence often being the end result (Rudolph, 1990; Horowitz, 1987; Leslie, 1992; Lucas, 2006; Thelin, 2004). Furthermore, when implementing decisions, educational leaders should possess not only a comprehensive understanding of the challenges facing their organization and the options available to them, but also strive to develop a complete, nuanced understanding of their organization’s culture and how each decision may be interpreted – and therefore impact – their respective campus community (Tierney, 1988). Those who successfully pursue

such a culturally-sensitive course of action often see their efforts flourish into what Burton Clark (1970) describes as an “organizational saga” – when a successful mission is enacted and transforms a theme and/or program into a “powerful legend” that stands the test of time (p. 8). The First-Year Program, a comprehensive LLP approved by St. Lawrence University faculty in the fall of 1986, ultimately proved to be a compelling chapter in that institution’s organizational saga. This case study may help illuminate the way for others.

1.3. Local Context

St. Lawrence University is a small, private liberal arts college located in a rural community in upstate New York. The total undergraduate enrollment in the 2015-2016 academic year was approximately 2,400 students, 99% of whom live in university-owned on-campus housing or recognized Greek-affiliated housing. It is a selective institution, with an acceptance rate of 42% for the Class of 2020. Founded in 1856 by the Universalist Church, it is recognized as the oldest continuously coeducational institution of higher education in New York State. While predominately a residential undergraduate college today, the institution at one time also housed a theological school, and agricultural college, a graduate college, and an off-site law school located in Brooklyn. St. Lawrence has “university” status today due to the presence of a small graduate college with approximately 100 students enrolled in three graduate programs. A comprehensive history of the institutional setting for this case study is outlined in Chapter 4.

The comprehensive LLP at the center of this case study, the First-Year Program (FYP), was formally launched as a pilot at St. Lawrence in the 1987-1988 academic year.

Approximately one third of the incoming first-year class enrolled in the FYP during its inaugural year. The following year, the FYP became a requirement for all incoming first-year students at the University. It continues to be a cornerstone of the academic curriculum at St. Lawrence to this day. Over the years, the University has conducted extensive assessment on the FYP in an effort to understand the program's impact on student learning. External and internal reviews were performed within the first five years of the program's existence and are discussed in Chapter 5. Ongoing assessment efforts have also been conducted by the Office of the First-Year, the Office of Institutional Research, and the University's Assessment Committee. Survey instruments utilized include the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey, the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) College Senior Survey, and the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS) Senior Survey. Several in-house survey instruments are also utilized to assess the effectiveness of the FYP. These collective efforts help explain why this case study focuses on the FYP's influence on institutional culture, rather than seeking to assess its effectiveness on specific student learning outcome(s).

1.4. Purpose of Study

This case study provides a thick description of the internal conflict and cultural implications related to the founding and implementation of St. Lawrence University's First-Year Program, a comprehensive LLP aimed at supporting the first-year student transition. Through historical document analysis, as well as qualitative research focusing on the fundamental values, basic assumptions, and shared beliefs of the campus

community, this case study seeks to understand why this program was founded, how it was ultimately able to sustain within the organization, and identify ways in which its presence has shaped institutional culture for faculty, students, and administrators. The literature review topics I review include institutional culture, organizational change, and living-learning programs. I also provide a historical overview of liberal arts colleges and incorporate the evolution of academic curriculum, scholarship, and the student affairs profession.

To study this problem, this case study adopted a two-phase approach. First, I analyzed public institutional archive documents and artifacts to gain a comprehensive understanding of the history of the university, as well as the evolution of the FYP. I then utilized a narrative inquiry approach to conduct in-depth interviews with faculty and administrators who played key roles in the foundational years of this LLP, as well as with faculty who opposed the program.¹ The findings of this study demonstrate how preexisting cultural conditions heavily influenced the creation and development of the FYP. This study also identifies the ways in which several deeply entrenched cultural conditions changed, indicating this comprehensive LLP fostered a relational capacity to facilitate cultural change

1.5. Research Questions

Two key research questions guide the overall methodology of this study. Utilizing Kuh & Whitt's (1988) *Framework for Analyzing Culture in Higher Education*, this study seeks to illuminate:

¹ My access to the setting of this case study enabled me to interview multiple subjects who have been involved with the program for over 30 years.

1. How does institutional culture influence the creation and development of an LLP?
2. In what ways can an LLP reciprocally shape institutional culture?

Four sub-questions also guide this study. Based on Schein's (2004) *Conceptual Model for Managed Culture Change*, these sub-questions were utilized as a guiding framework for the interview protocol and helped clarify the focus of relevant content to be researched:

1. What were the institutional culture conditions at St. Lawrence University in the 1970's and 1980's and how did they contribute to the formation of the FYP?
2. Why was a residential college model adopted for the FYP?
3. What cultural factors influenced the implementation and initial development of the FYP?
4. In what ways do faculty and administrators perceive institutional culture conditions have changed at St. Lawrence since the implementation of the FYP?

1.6. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study embraces an interpretivist paradigm while at the same time employing a multi-lens theoretical framework to research. An interpretive approach believes individuals seek to understand their world through the process of developing subjective meanings of their life experiences (Creswell, 2013). These subjective meanings "are varied and multiple, leading the research to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings into a few categories or ideas (Creswell, 2013, p. 24). This conceptual approach accurately explains the root problems

identified above, while at the same time bridging a natural connection with the narrative inquiry research methodology utilized by this case study.

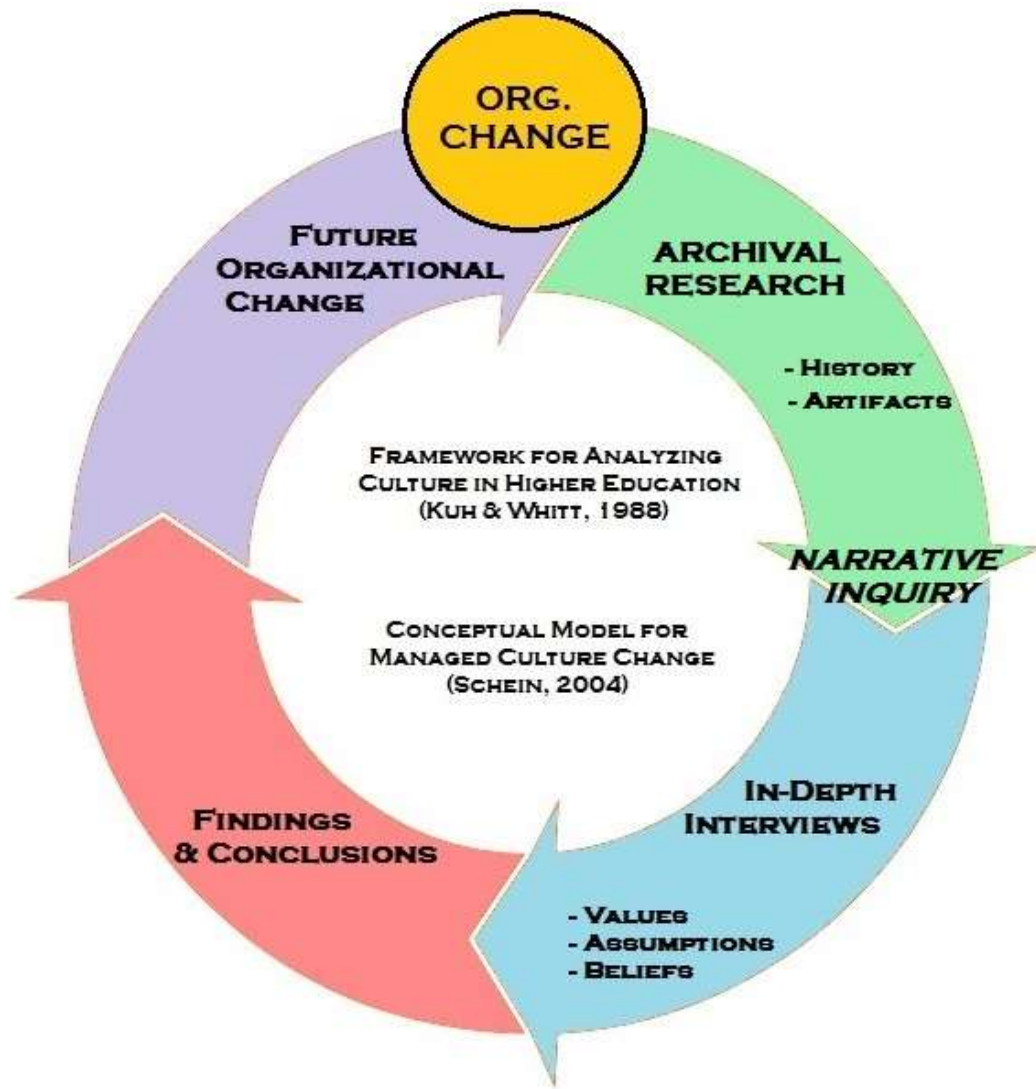


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The research methodology and research questions of this study are framed around a multi-lens theoretical framework, outlined in Figure 1. Kuh & Whitt's (1988) *Framework for Analyzing Culture in Higher Education* is used to define institutional

culture. Since this definition specifically describes institutional culture as “a process as well as a product” (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p. iv), the scope of this study will focus not only on the development and implementation of St. Lawrence University’s FYP, yet also seek to understand how the program was able to sustain itself and reciprocally impact institutional culture beyond its foundational years. This study will also adopt Schein’s *Conceptual Model for Managed Culture Change*, and his concept of “unfreezing” and “refreezing,” as a theoretical mechanism to construct the cultural change documented in this case study. Both theoretical frameworks will be discussed in-depth in Chapter 3.

1.7. Definition of Relevant Terms

The three central concepts of this case study are institutional culture, organizational change, and living-learning programs. I have adopted Kuh & Whitt’s (1988) definition of institutional culture, which is described as:

The collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups in an institute of higher education and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and action on and off campus. (p. 12-13)

This study focuses on organizational change resulting in cultural shifts, and therefore can best be understood through Schein’s (2004) definition of organizational culture:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaption and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems (p. 12).

I will also provide a general definition for LLPs, and further clarify what I mean when I refer to St. Lawrence’s program as a comprehensive LLP. This study defines an LLP by assuming the same definition adopted by the National Study of Living-Learning

Programs (Inkelas & Associates, 2008), as well as the Study of Integrated Living-Learning Programs (Mayhew et al., 2016). This constitutes any program in which students, “live together on campus, take part in a shared academic endeavor, use resources in their residence environment designed specifically for them, and have structured social activities in their residential environment that stress academics” (Inkelas, Zeller, Murphy & Hummell, 2006, p. 11). However, as Inkelas & Associates (2008) explain, the types of LLPs offered across the country vary greatly. Therefore, this study embraces the empirically-derived structural typologies identified by Inkelas, Soldner, Longerbeam, & Brown Leonard (2008) and identifies St. Lawrence’s FYP as a “comprehensive” LLP. Such programs are defined as “large, comprehensively resourced, student affairs/academic affairs collaboration programs...students in this type of living-learning program had access to a wide range of resources as well as programs” (Inkelas et al., 2008, p. 503).

1.8. Background and Role of Researcher

My connection to this topic is rooted in my personal experience during my undergraduate years, as well as my professional experience as an educator. As a student, I transferred between two colleges with very different institutional cultures. When I originally chose to attend college, I planned to be an engineer and attended an institution focusing exclusively on math, science, and technical training. This school aggressively promoted the educational paradigm of career preparation. A cornerstone of its curriculum was a year-round academic calendar featuring a comprehensive “co-op” program beginning freshman year and continuing through senior year; my fellow

classmates and I would spend six months of every year spread throughout the country, working for our respective engineering firms. The intended goal of this integrated co-op experience was true hands-on, practical job training. As a result, the six months spent on-campus taking classes proved to be a very rigid, academically-focused experience. It offered little flexibility in the curriculum and did not incorporate opportunities for personal reflection of the co-op experience. Even less attention was devoted to integrated co-curricular activities or student life, as on-campus residential housing was only offered to first-year students. All upperclass students were forced to find off-campus housing beginning sophomore year or join a Greek organization and live in a chapter house.

During this time in my life, I found myself visiting other college campuses to connect with old high school friends. I quickly recognized a stark difference between their college experience and mine. Many of my friends were exploring different academic interests, participating in intercollegiate athletics, and getting involved with student clubs and organizations. They were also forming deeper connections with their classmates than I was, all within a vibrant campus life environment. Such are the opportunities readily available when an individual spends the bulk of a calendar year in a shared residential environment with the same community of people. It was clear to me that my friends' out-of-classroom experiences were playing an equally large role in their education and complimenting their academic growth in ways my "college experience" was not. I soon began to question the holistic quality of the education I was receiving.

At the conclusion of my sophomore year, I chose to transfer to a liberal arts institution and changed my major to history and education. At my new school, I also

chose to enroll in a broad spectrum of humanities courses, competed as an intercollegiate athlete, and became a Resident Assistant. I was encouraged by those around me to embrace all of these opportunities. This self-directed personal journey taught me how significantly institutional culture can impact the college experience. I also learned how critical the role of residential and co-curricular experiences can be in positively shaping an individual student's academic and social growth. This life experience drives my passion and conceptual approach to this topic.

My connection to this particular case study site is rooted in my childhood upbringing, as I grew up in the same small, rural town in upstate New York where St. Lawrence University is located. My family moved to this community in November of 1986, at approximately the same time the faculty voted to approve the "Freshman Program." This commonality creates within me a feeling of intangible connection, for as I was growing up just a few miles down the road from this campus, the FYP was undergoing a similar transformation of growth and development. This LLP was taking shape and making an impact on the first-year student transition, while at the same time reciprocally shaping the institutional culture of the university.

During the early stages of my professional career in student affairs, I was fortunate to help lead development efforts of new LLPs at two separate institutions. However, in both cases these programs were met with resistance by faculty who held strong reservations or opposed the program outright. The presence of such deep-seeded cultural tensions have always intrigued me. I have since returned to my hometown and currently serve as the Assistant Dean of Student Life and Director of Residence Life &

Housing at St. Lawrence University. In this professional role, I work directly with the current Associate Dean of the First Year in identifying ways to further strengthen academic and residential connections for first-year students.

My personal self-directed life journey, as well as my unique, full-circle connection to St. Lawrence University's FYP, drives my passion for this research. I sincerely believe this is an important narrative to share. However, my specific role as a researcher in this process is to be a learner and reflect upon the research process and its findings; it is crucial to "learn from and with research participants" and not approach this process as an expert or authority figure (Glesne, 2011, p. 60). Furthermore, the interviewer must become an attentive listener who shapes the process into a familiar and comfortable form of social engagement, or conversation (Patton, 2002). Through this approach, I seek to illuminate the cultural implications behind this LLP's initial founding, why it was able to ultimately sustain, and how it has reciprocally shaped institutional culture.

1.9. Organization of Study

This introductory chapter has provided a brief summary of the problem that will be examined, in addition to explaining its significance. The purpose of this case study was then stated, along with an outline of the conceptual framework and corresponding research questions. Relevant terms were then identified, in addition to a brief description of my background and role as a researcher in this study. I also shared my personal background and reasons for choosing this particular study.

The next chapter of this case study provides a comprehensive review of literature in the areas of institutional culture, organizational culture change, and living-learning programs. Since the narrative inquiry structure of this particular study provides a thick description of St. Lawrence University's history, as well as a detailed history of the FYP, my literature review also provides a brief history of liberal arts colleges in America. This history specifically focuses on trends in student culture over time, in addition to developments in academic curriculum, scholarship, LLPs, and the profession of student affairs.

Chapter 3 focuses on the methodology of this case study and outlines a clear research design proposal. I discuss the value of utilizing narrative inquiry approach and why individual interviews are appropriate for this particular qualitative study, in addition to data collection and analysis procedures. The setting of this case study will also be described, including the overall and sample populations, and all factors associated with access to the site. I will also address reliability and validity concerns, limits and delimitations, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 provides an in-depth description of the institutional setting of this case study. It is a summary of the first half of my document analysis, focusing on the history of St. Lawrence University beginning with its founding in 1856 through the late 1970's. This historical overview provides not only concrete facts – dates, people, and events – but also provides a “cultural roadmap” for the reader. The narrative shared throughout Chapter 4 clarifies precisely how the history of this unique institution created and shaped the values, assumptions, and beliefs of the campus community over the course of its first

125 years, ultimately leading to the cultural conditions that necessitated the faculty to take action and advocate for the creation of the FYP in the early 1980's.

The findings of this case study are shared in Chapter 5. I present them by integrating the second half of my document analysis with quotes from the in-depth narrative inquiry interviews, highlighting key themes and cultural artifacts. The time period discussed in Chapter 5 are the foundational years of the FYP, beginning in the late 1970's, through the summer of 1996. I also highlight the ways in which faculty and administrators perceive the FYP has reciprocally shaped the institutional culture of the University.

Finally, Chapter 6 of this case study provides a comprehensive discussion and analysis of the research questions. Connections to the literature review are made, and transferable conclusions are drawn based on the research findings. Limitations of this case study are reviewed once again, and I also discuss implications for future practice as well as implications for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Students face a number of defining challenges during their first year in college. These challenges can be overcome through the personal relationships they develop with faculty and other members of the campus community (Chambliss & Takacs, 2014). It is important for institutions to change in ways that provide a more seamless living-learning experience, thereby enabling students to transition successfully into college life. However, one of the most common challenges facing colleges and universities that seek change is a tendency for institutional culture dynamics to be potentially divisive and foster internal conflict (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Such conflict impacts faculty, students, and administrative subcultures.

One potential solution to the problem of divisive institutional culture dynamics being compounded by structural disconnects of academic and residential life are residentially based living-learning programs (LLPs). As explained by Kuh (1996), LLPs integrate the classroom and residence hall environments, blurring the traditional boundaries between the classroom and co-curricular experience. This integrated residential experience has the capability of facilitating a cohesive cultural bridge between faculty, students, and administrators (Levin Laufgraben, O'Connor, & Williams, 2007). When faculty and administration are able to partner in ways that overcome divisive cultural dynamics, opportunities are created to better educate the whole student and greatly enhance the campus climate (Nash et al., 2016). Unfortunately, institutions of higher education are well-known for being naturally resistant to change; colleges and universities identify strongly with their own cultural heritage and are often charged in

part by society to preserve cultural and social norms (Shapiro & Levine, 1999). It is important for educational leaders to understand these complex, culturally-based conflicts and possess the ability to interpret and overcome these challenges (Tierney, 1988).

This case study provides a thick description of the internal conflict and cultural implications related to the founding and implementation of St. Lawrence University's First-Year Program (FYP), a comprehensive LLP aimed at supporting the first-year student transition. Through historical document analysis, as well as qualitative research focusing on the fundamental values, basic assumptions, and shared beliefs of the campus community, this case study seeks to understand why this program was founded, how it was ultimately able to sustain within the organization, and identified ways in which its presence shaped institutional culture for faculty, students, and administrators.

Before the findings of a study can be discussed, it is important to place them within the proper context and establish a thorough understanding of relevant scholarly literature. This chapter will provide a comprehensive review of literature and research in the areas of institutional culture, organizational change, and living-learning programs (LLPs). First, I will discuss the two scholarly works serving as the theoretical frameworks for this study – Kuh & Whitt's (1988) *Framework for Analyzing Culture in Higher Education*, as well as Schein's (2004) *Conceptual Model for Managed Culture Change*. Second, I will outline key research in the field of institutional culture within higher education. A review of relevant organizational change theory will then be discussed. I will then provide a brief history of residential liberal arts colleges in America. This historical overview specifically focuses on intersecting trends between

student culture, academic curriculum, scholarship, and student affairs; it is important to provide this historical perspective so the narrative of St. Lawrence University can be placed into proper context. The final topic of focus in this literature review is LLPs. I will first provide a brief history documenting the evolution of the LLP concept. I will then highlight key scholarly work already conducted within this field and identify where potential gaps in the research exist. I will conclude this chapter by analyzing the literature discussed in this review.

2.1. Theoretical Frameworks

This case study will embrace a multi-lens theoretical framework approach. Specifically, I will utilize Kuh and Whitt's (1988) *Framework for Analyzing Culture in Higher Education*, as detailed in their book *The Invisible Tapestry*, to define and interpret institutional culture. This framework was used when coding the qualitative data in this study and was helpful in analyzing the intersection of academic and residential life within the context of St. Lawrence's FYP. To better understand how organizational culture change was facilitated through a series of events over a long period of time, Schein's (2004) *Conceptual Model for Managed Culture Change*, as outlined in his book *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, was also utilized as a secondary theoretical lens. This framework was implemented to define the period of transition and development of the FYP, which proved to be helpful when conducting narrative inquiry interviews. How these two theories intersect with one another in this study is illustrated in Figure 2. Each theoretical framework contains several key concepts that ultimately shaped the literature review, methodology, and research design of this case study.

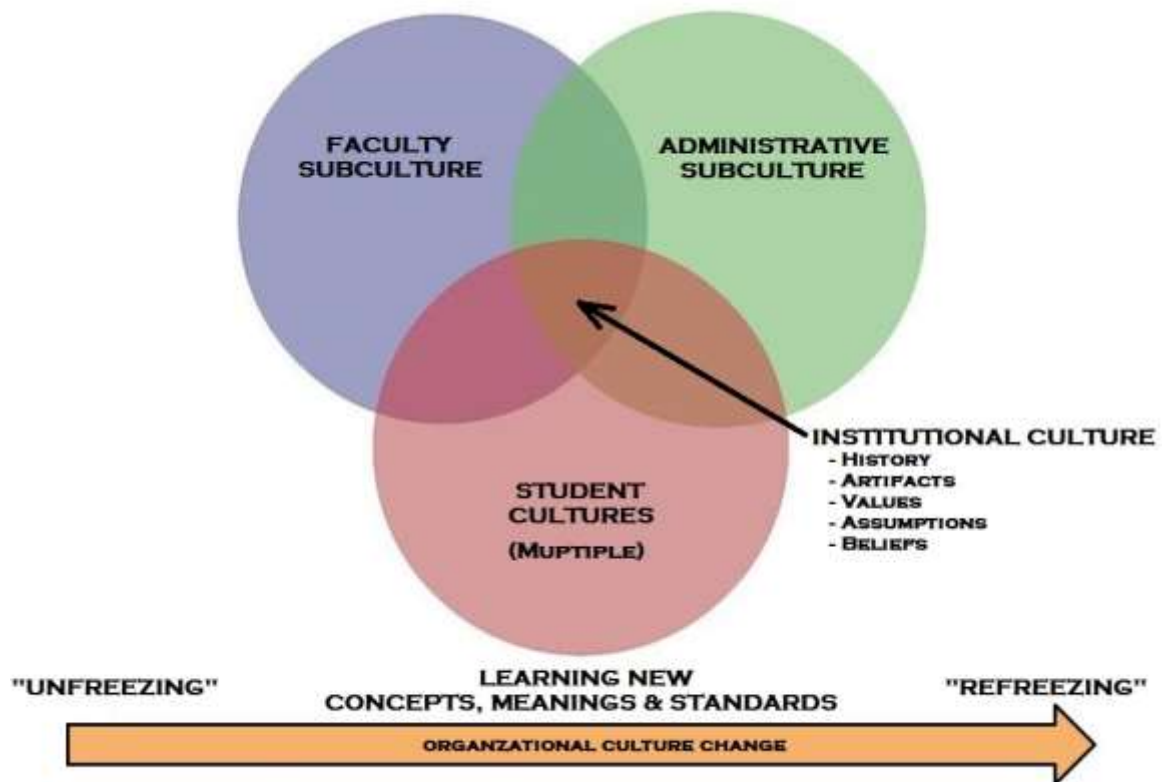


Figure 2: Theoretical Framework

2.1.1. Kuh & Whitt's Framework for Analyzing Culture in Higher Education

Institutional culture is a process as well as a product (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). This process can be described as reciprocal in that it shapes – and is shaped by – the interpersonal interactions and relationships formed between various members of a campus community (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). These interpersonal connections ultimately produce a cultural “product” by influencing the institution’s future artifacts, espoused and enacted values, and core beliefs and assumptions, which are shared and embraced by faculty, students, and administrators (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). This interdependent relationship of process and product shapes the research questions of this study. Rather

than simply seeking to understand how the 1986 proposal for a “Freshman Program” was developed and implemented, it is equally important to research how this organizational change was able to sustain – as well as reciprocally influence culture – throughout its foundational years. Kuh & Whitt (1988) also contend culture can effectively convey a sense of identity, facilitate a commitment to an entity other than one’s self, can enhance stability of a social system, and provide a sense-making device that can guide and shape behavior. Each of these factors help to explain how institutional culture can be an effective lens through which one can better understand organizational change and also analyze and construct a bridge between academic and residential life.

2.1.2. Schein’s Conceptual Model for Managed Culture Change

Since this case study focuses on a specific event on a college campus that fundamentally changed the organization, it is critical to also identify and discuss the work of Edgar Schein. His conceptual model for managed cultural change involves three stages and five key principles, which are detailed in Table 1. The first stage of managed organizational change, labeled “unfreezing,” focuses on creating the motivation for change. This initial phase must have three separate conditions met. Specifically, Schein (2004) contends that “disconfirming data” must exist to cause a disruption to the status quo, this disruption must cause anxiety and/or guilt on the part of community members, and that the environment must lend itself to a sense of “psychological safety” so that a sense of “survival anxiety” can overcome the “learning anxiety” that inevitably accompanies a situation of change (p. 301). The second stage of managed organizational change focuses on learning new concepts, new meanings for old concepts, and new

standards for judgement (Schein, 2004). In other words, community members must go through a period in which they make sense of their new environment, identify with their new emerging role models, and learn how to navigate the new cultural norms through trial-and-error. The final stage of managed organizational change is the “refreezing” process, focusing on internalizing the new concepts, meanings, and standards (Schein, 2004). This three-phase conceptual model for organizational change will be utilized during the data analysis phase of this study and can be an effective tool to help better understand and more clearly outline the in-depth, complex narrative of organization change to be explored in this study.

Table 1: Principles of the Conceptual Model for Managed Culture Change

No.	Description
Principle 1	Survival anxiety or guild must be greater than learning anxiety
Principle 2	Learning anxiety must be reduced rather than increasing survival anxiety
Principle 3	The change goal must be defined concretely in terms of the specific problem you are trying to fix, not as “culture change”
Principle 4	Old cultural elements can be destroyed by eliminating the people who “carry” those elements, but new cultural elements can only be learned if the new behavior lead to success and satisfaction
Principle 5	Culture change is always transformative change that requires a period of unlearning that is psychologically painful

2.2. Institutional Culture

The term “culture” is a commonly used phrase often applied in over-simplified, inaccurate ways to describe organized groups of people. The literature outlined here, consisting of seven scholarly works, will seek to clarify this term, specifically within the

context of higher education. First, I will highlight the concept of group dynamics. I will then review scholarship focusing on student culture, discuss the concept of what makes a college or university “distinct,” and conclude by expanding into institutional culture research focusing not only on students, but faculty and administration, as well.

When considering the concept of culture in any setting, it is critical to mention the work of Lewin, who is credited with identifying the concept of “group dynamics.” Lewin (1947) defined this concept as the way in which groups and individuals interacted to changing circumstances. His work demonstrated how an individual’s personal characteristics are directly influenced by the environmental factors of a group, its members, and the particular situation in question (Lewin, 1947). Through his research, Lewin was able to prove that group phenomena exists and has a direct influence on behavior.

2.2.1. Student Cultures

Early research on institutional culture in higher education focused solely on student culture. This included the work of Newcomb and Wallace. In his study of students at Bennington College during the years 1934-1939, Newcomb (1943) utilized a mixed methods research approach to demonstrate how students conformed to patterns in the collegiate environment. Specifically, the purpose of his study was to “discover factors associated with different degrees and rates of change by individuals;” he was able to conclude that “community forces” do influence student attitudes, beliefs, and interests (Newcomb, 1943, p. 23). Newcomb’s (1943) research is notable in that it specifically

discussed incoming first-year student perceptions to socialization factors and how they are influenced:

The histories and personal characteristics of entering freshmen are such that they are impelled to varying degrees of leadership and prestige, and that within a few weeks of entering college they have already 'sized up' the dominant community trends, toward which they adapt themselves in proportion to their habits of seeking leadership and prestige. (p. 149)

This demonstrated that students at Bennington College as far back as the 1930's naturally developed social hierarchies and placed different values on the attitudes, values, and interests of different subcultures. Incoming first-year students entered this new world, quickly adapted to it, and often pursued what were perceived as prestigious endeavors. It is important to note Newcomb's (1943) research also indicated students "show a significant change in social attitudes...between freshman and senior years in college," with senior attitudes most often persisting after graduation (p. 146). Newcomb was able to triangulate his data by gathering similar results from students at nearby Williams College and Skidmore College.

In his study of students at Beloit College in the late 1950's, Wallace (1966) also focused on student socialization factors, yet examined the impact of informal social structures on students' academic values, achievement, and aspirations. Through a quantitative case study, he sought to understand how incoming first-year students react to two distinct subcultures – adolescent upper-class student groups and adult faculty members. Wallace's (1966) findings concluded faculty interactions have a positive influence on academic achievement and grades, while interactions with student peers – in particular, Greek organizations – often deemphasized academic achievement and had a

negative impact on student success. Another critical finding was that most negative academic attitude changes among incoming first-year students occurred within the first seven weeks of their college experience (Wallace, 1966). Furthermore, Wallace (1966) contends these detrimental changes in values and norms are influenced by upperclass students within the campus community – and not other freshmen peers. This work further validates Newcomb’s findings and highlights just how vital a healthy, academically-focused transition experience into college is for incoming new students.

Any discussion of student culture must consider the work of Horowitz (1987) and her book *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteen Century to the Present*. Horowitz identifies key historical student subcultures while demonstrating how interconnected relationships between faculty and students were often in conflict and steadily evolved throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. According to Horowitz (1987), the dominant student culture on American college campuses are “college men” and “college women,” who tend to focus on vibrant social life and grade obsession while at the same time devaluing academic and intellectual attainment. This traditional “college life,” however, has never included all students. Horowitz (1987) also identified two other student subcultures, the “Outsiders” and the “Rebels.” The “Outsiders” are recognized as academically-engaged students who “accepted the hard discipline of study and its stimulating challenges...[and] connected to their teachers, perceiving them as mentors and allies, not as antagonists” (Horowitz, 1987, p. 15). “Outsider” students operate largely outside the dominant social culture of the campus and often view success in college as a means to better life; throughout history

they have been comprised largely of first-generation college students and individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds (Horowitz, 1987). The other student subculture, the “Rebels,” do not gravitate in a particular direction in regard to classroom performance or the party culture – they are defined by their commitment to breaking conventions, fighting the social distinctions present on most campuses, and “revel in difference, not uniformity” (Horowitz, 1987, p. 16). As outlined in Chapter 4, each type of student subculture has been present in the history of St. Lawrence University.

2.2.2. The “Distinctive College”

In 1970, Clark published *The Distinctive College*, which proved to be a groundbreaking study. Focusing on the historical narratives of three private liberal arts colleges – Antioch, Reed, and Swarthmore – with qualitative research conducted between 1958-1963, Clark (1970) sought to “study the general organizational character, especially distinctive character, and to understand its initiation and development” (p. 6). His research identified the phenomenon of the “organizational saga,” which is the “central ingredient” that makes each of the three colleges involved in this study the special, distinct institutions as they have come to be known (Clark, 1970, p. 234). The concept of an organizational saga can be described as:

All organizations have a social role, ways of behaving linked with defined positions in the larger society, but only some have seized their role in the purposive way that we call a mission. Then, among those that have been strongly purposive, only some are able to sustain and develop the mission over time to the point of success and acclaim. The mission is then transformed into an embracing saga. We are able to speak then of colleges...that become legendary, even heroic, figures on the social stage. (Clark, 1970, p. 8)

Clark's focus on organizational sagas, and how belief and loyalty within a college community can be a powerful tool, played a key role in shifting the focus of research on culture within higher education. Specifically, future researchers began looking at other subcultures within higher education, including faculty and administrative cultures, as well as the entire system of higher education as its own distinct organizational culture.

2.2.3. Expanding the Scope of Institutional Culture

Tierney was one researcher who began to focus on other aspects of institutional culture beyond students. In his qualitative study of Penn State College in 1984-1985, Tierney (1988) explained how institutions are not only influenced by powerful external factors such as demographics, economics, and politics, but are also shaped by internal factors, as well. Tierney (1988) argued these internal dynamics can trace their roots to the organizational histories of each respective college or university, deriving their forces from the values, processes, and goals held by individuals and groups directly involved in the organization's day-to-day planning and development. Therefore, organizational culture exists in part through the individual and group interpretations of historical and symbolic forms. Furthermore, people often develop a sense of belonging and admiration for their institution through the interactions, communications, and development of interpersonal relationships built across a campus community (Tierney, 1988). As Tierney (1988) explained, a strong understanding of this powerful dynamic can greatly assist educational leaders in the decision-making process:

The culture of an organization is grounded in the shared assumptions of individuals participating in the organization. Often taken for granted by the actors themselves, these assumptions can be identified through stories, special language, norms, institutional ideology, and attitudes that emerge from individual and

organizational behavior... Thus, an analysis of organizational culture of a college or university occurs as if the institution were an interconnected web that cannot be understood unless one looks not only at the structure and natural laws of that web, but also at the actors' interpretations of the web itself. (p. 4)

The research of Bergquist built off Tierney's work and sought to provide a detailed analysis of collegiate culture. His qualitative study was developed over the course of twenty years, during which time Bergquist (1992) conducted interviews and consultations at over 300 colleges and universities and ultimately identifies four distinct subcultures – collegial, managerial, developmental, and advocacy/negotiating. Collegial culture is what many consider to be traditional “faculty culture” and can be categorized as a campus group that finds meaning in academic disciplines, values research, scholarship, and shared governance, and views the role of a university as that of generating, interpreting, and disseminating knowledge (Bergquist, 1992). Managerial culture is commonly referred to as “administrative culture” and is best defined by its adherence to organization, implementation, and evaluation of work directed at specific institutional goals, values associated with fiscal responsibility and effective supervision, and views the role of a university as a mechanism to impart specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes in students so they may become successful and responsible citizens in society (Bergquist, 1992).

The remaining two subcultures – developmental and advocacy/negotiating – can include faculty or administrators. Developmental culture seeks to create programs and activities that further the personal and professional growth of all members within the collegiate community and has a strong degree of passion for all to grow as individuals (Bergquist, 1992). Members of the advocacy/negotiating subculture focus on being

agents for social justice and social change. They seek to establish policies that distribute resources and benefits of the institution in an equitable way, yet often hold inherently conflicting views on the role of the college as an “undesirable promulgation of existing and often repressive social structures or the establishment of new and more liberating social attitudes and structures” (Bergquist, 1992, p. 5). How each of these institutional subcultures engage with one another, compromise, and craft policy is a fundamental theme of this study.

2.3. Organizational Change

Organizations were created as a solution designed to meet a challenge or satisfy a need of society (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). How leaders interpret the cultural impact of these societal needs while at the same time effectively managing and adapting their organizations to address these needs is at the heart of this study. Identifying effective ways to enact positive organization change is critical in today’s society for a multitude of reasons. The world is smaller and more interdependent and requires inspired teams that achieve and learn together, while at the same time tapping into their full capacities in a way traditional authoritarian hierarchies fail to accomplish (Senge, 1990). The literature outlined here, consisting of five literary works, will seek to establish clarity in regard to these efforts. First, I will outline the research of Weick, who presents an organizational framework that is most commonly found in higher education. I will then provide a summary of contemporary organizational change theory, focusing on scholarship in the areas of systems thinking, creating learning organizations, appreciative

inquiry, adaptive leadership, and the link between human emotions and organizational change.

Before discussing the concept of organizational change, one must first understand the predominant organizational structure currently dominating American higher education. The work of Weick (1976) and his theory of educational organizations as “loosely coupled systems” provides an accurate framework. Weick (1976) argues that since modern colleges and universities are comprised of separate divisions, each of which have independently managed departments and offices, what happens within one department does not always influence – or even have an impact on – what happens in other offices. Weick’s research is applicable to academic subculture, as well as administrative subculture. This theoretical framework helps explain the central problem of this study – institutional culture dynamics which can be potentially divisive and foster inherent conflict. It also helps to better understand the polarizing perspectives between faculty, students, and administrators on the issue of institutional “control,” as well as their respective views on academic scholarship later outlined in this literature review.

The work of Senge (1990) and his conceptual framework of “systems thinking” is important research to discuss when considering perspectives on organizational change. Systems thinking can be defined as, “a conceptual framework, a body of knowledge, and tools that have been developed over the past fifty years, to make the full patterns clearer, and to help us see how to change them effectively” (Senge, 1990, p. 7). Senge (1990) made the observation we are taught to make sense of the world through fragmentation. However, he argues there are hidden costs associated with this incomplete, disjointed

viewpoint. These include a loss of connection to the holistic problem, as well as an inability to often understand the impact of our actions on others (Senge, 1990). Senge (1990) explains there are “ways of working together that are vastly more satisfying and more productive than the prevailing system of management,” which consists of eight basic elements outlined in Table 2 (p. xviii).

Table 2: Senge’s Elements of the Prevailing System of Management

No.	Description
Element 1	Management by measurement
Element 2	Compliance-based cultures
Element 3	Managing outcomes
Element 4	“Right answers” vs. “wrong answers”
Element 5	Uniformity
Element 6	Predictability and controllability
Element 7	Excessive competitiveness and distrust
Element 8	Loss of the whole

According to Senge (1990), the alternative to the prevailing system of management is creating learning organizations. A learning organization is “a place where people are continually discovering how they create their reality. And how they can change it” (p. 12). In such an environment, people are continually learning how to learn together. This can be accomplished by organizations and leaders adopting the five disciplines of personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking (Senge, 1990). When applying this framework to the field of higher education and the focus of this study, the concept of a genuinely shared vision is especially important. As

Senge (1990) explains, “when there is a genuine vision (as opposed to the all-too-familiar ‘vision statement’), people excel and learn, not because they are told to, but because they want to” (p. 9). This research is relevant to this study, as the FYP ultimately fostered a learning organization not only among the students, but within the faculty as well. This impact led to a host of positive changes within the university.

Another approach to organizational change is through “appreciative inquiry.” This concept was originally developed by Cooperrider while he was a doctoral candidate at Case Western Reserve University and conducting research on organizational behavior. The underlying belief of the “appreciative inquiry” approach is that collective strengths transform; by focusing on core strengths of people and organizations, it is possible to reshape the future (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). Cooperrider & Whitney (2005) argue that human systems grow in the direction of what they persistently ask questions about; if leaders focus on the positive attributes, then the organization will seek to evolve in a positive ways. Conversely, this approach refutes the long-standing tactic that many leaders take, which is trying to fix what is wrong while letting the strengths take care of themselves. This traditional perspective of organizational management is identified by Cooperrider & Whitney (2005) as a deficit-based approach; they argue such an approach often focuses on turn-over rates as opposed to staff retention, is slow and looks backward, rarely results in a new vision, and typically creates a negative, defensive organizational culture. When facing challenges, Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) explain that the traditional deficit based approach makes the fundamental assumption that the organization is a problem to be solved – which ultimately leads to a return of the status

quo – as opposed to the appreciative inquiry assumption that the organization is a mystery to be embraced – a framework that enables stakeholders to reach their greatest potential. The five principles of appreciative inquiry are outlined below in Table 3:

Table 3: Five Principles of Appreciative Inquiry

No.	Description
Principle 1: Constructivist	We are constantly making sense of the world around us; “never ending collaborative quest to understand and construct better options for living (p. 49-50).
Principle 2: Simultaneity	Inquiry and change are simultaneous, with change beginning the moment questions are asked
Principle 3: Poetic	Organizations are an open book that is constantly being authored; it is important not to “reproduce the same worlds over and over again”(p. 52).
Principle 4: Anticipatory	Positive imaged lead to positive change
Principle 5: Positive	Large amounts of positive affect and social bonding build and sustain momentum for change; craft and ask unconditionally positive questions

The concept of appreciative inquiry is applicable to this study, as the founders of the FYP ultimately focused on the perceived strengths of St. Lawrence’s institutional culture when formulating the core structure and values of this new program.

“Adaptive leadership” and the work of Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) is another important theory of organization change. This approach to organizational change argues that adaptive problems demand a response beyond the current ‘tool kit’ available, as the gap between aspirations and operational capacity that is currently in place may be significant (Heifetz et al., 2009). To address this gap, one must adopt an approach that

enables a change in people's priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties (Heifetz et al., 2009). According to Heifetz et al. (2009), "the prevailing notion that leadership consists of having a vision and aligning people with it is bankrupt because it continues to treat adaptive situations as if they were technical." This approach provides new insights on change, as it argues people do not mind change, yet rather they fear loss (Heifetz et al., 2009). In other words, it is really all about the people, not the "thing" to change. Ways to foster change through this lens include facilitating a transparent environment, managing politics through stakeholders, cultivating shared responsibility, and developing a pipeline of talent (Heifetz et al., 2009). This research is relevant to this study, as the entire First-Year Program – and the change it represented – proved to be an exercise in adaptive change.

Another area of focus for this study is the work of John Kotter (2012), who looked closely at the role of emotions in organizational change, which also supports the previous literature in this field. Kotter's study examined approximately 100 cases of organization and found that most people did not handle large-scale change well and sought to identify what leaders could do to effectively transform their organizations. Kotter (2012) found the central issue is never strategy, structure, culture, or systems. While each of those elements are important, the core of the matter is always about changing the behavior of people – and behavior change happens in highly successful situations mostly by speaking to people's feelings (Kotter, 2012). Kotter (2012) further explains that, "changing behavior is less a matter of giving people analysis to influence their thoughts than helping them see a truth to influence their feelings. Both thinking and feeling are

essential, and both are found in successful organizations, but the heart of change is in the emotions” (p. 2). This research is relevant to this study, as the narrative of this case study clearly demonstrates that intense, culturally-based emotions were central a part of the FYP’s development process.

2.4. A Historical Overview: Residential Liberal Arts Colleges & Culture

In this section I will provide a brief history of residential liberal arts colleges in America. This will provide the historical perspective necessary for the narrative of St. Lawrence University, as outlined in Chapter 4, to be placed into proper historical context. Several scholarly works were incorporated into the construction of this historical narrative. Rudolph’s *The American College & University: A History*, first published in 1962 and considered one of the defining works on higher education, is cited. Another seminal work written by Veysey in 1965, *The Emergence of the American University*, was also utilized. In addition to this, modern interpretations of higher education history were applied. These include Thelin’s (2004) *A History of American Higher Education*, as well as Lucas’s (2006) *American Higher Education: A History*. Each of these scholars focus broadly on the historical landscape of higher education, thereby making it crucial to also consider the previously-discussed work of Horowitz (1987). Her research on student culture, as detailed in the book *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteen Century to the Present*, is also cited. By weaving the analysis provided by each of these scholarly works together, I seek to craft a historical overview of residential liberal arts colleges in the United States specifically focusing on intersecting trends between student culture, scholarship and curriculum, and student affairs.

2.4.1. European Influences

Residential liberal arts colleges in America are based heavily upon the English models of higher education. Most European medieval universities were initially defined not by their location, but as an organized collection of faculty and students; these early universities did not have buildings, residence halls, or central campuses. In fact, as late as the 13th century, it was not uncommon for European centers of higher learning to move periodically from one location to another. Collections of faculty and students would relocate to a different village if town-gown issues between students and local residents in their current community got out of hand (Lucas, 2006). Cambridge University, for example, was founded in 1209 after a group of faculty separated from Oxford following a riot between townsfolk and students – an incident during which a local woman was allegedly killed by students, ultimately leading to two or three individuals being hanged (Lucas, 2006).

It was the residential aspect of college life that ultimately led English universities to shed their patterns of frequent mobility. Specifically, the development of endowed residential halls, or *collegia*, started to become more common (Lucas, 2006). These residential colleges within a university system were developed out of the perceived need to establish student housing so rowdy adolescents could be monitored more closely by faculty (Lucas, 2006). The mutual benefits of this close-knit college structure quickly became apparent. As pointed out in research about these changes, students benefited from the common living arrangement, shared meals, and the financial protections afforded by controlled rent, while faculty enjoyed the benefits of a residential structure

providing adequate supervision, which helped keep students out of trouble and reduced the potential for conflict with local townspeople (Lucas, 2006). Over time, these college systems within the English universities evolved from simple dormitories into an intricate system of relatively autonomous, yet very sophisticated residential environments (Thelin, 2004). Each residential college ultimately offered its own special rights, privileges, traditions, and – perhaps most importantly – its own “distinctive character” or student culture (Lucas, 2006). This steady progression of privately-endowed colleges within England demonstrates how – even years before the founding of the American colonies – university administrators struggled with managing vibrant student subcultures, yet recognized the inherent strengths of an engaging residential experience.

2.4.2. Colonial America

The establishment of colleges in colonial America happened quickly. As Lucas (2006) explains, Massachusetts appropriated funds in 1636 – just eight years after the colony was founded – to establish of what would eventually be the first institution of higher education in the colonies, Harvard College. This action was followed by the founding of eight other colleges prior to the American Revolution in 1775. These schools included the College of William and Mary in Virginia (1693), the Collegiate School at New Haven; later renamed Yale College (1701), the College of Philadelphia; later renamed University of Pennsylvania (1740), the College of New Jersey; later renamed Princeton College (1746), King’s College; later renamed Columbia University (1754), the College of Rhode Island; later renamed Brown University (1764), Queen’s College, later renamed Rutgers College (1766); and finally Dartmouth College (1769).

Each of these nine institutions had two central missions from the onset – to provide an education based in morals of the Christian faith and prepare young men for positions of leadership in an emerging colonial society (Lucas, 2006). These early institutions also acted fully in loco parentis, meaning they served “in place of the parent...[with] the college acting for the parent” (Caple, 1998, p. 10). Not surprisingly, the founders of these colonial institutions of higher education embraced the residential college structure of Oxford and Cambridge (Thelin, 2004). This included a rigid academic curriculum and a residential campus in which students were housed together in dormitories. The goal was to “foster among all students a common social, moral, and intellectual life” (Lucas, 2006, p. 111). This basic residential college structure would also serve as the template for an entire new generation of liberal arts colleges that would emerge in the United States following the American Revolution, including St. Lawrence University.

While the colonial colleges initially possessed a clean reputation for strict discipline and order, expanding enrollments, inadequate housing, and student unrest resulted in an increasing number of issues (Lucas, 2006). In fact, as early as 1667, it was reported that upperclassmen at Harvard – founded in the heartland of Puritan values – were “fagging” freshmen, an old English practice of sending younger students out on private errands (Horowitz, 1987). By the 1700’s, this type of behavior evolved into a reported case of students placing live snakes in their tutor’s room and stealing his wine (Horowitz, 1987). It is clear the vibrant and rebellious student cultures that had caused so many problems at Oxford and Cambridge were now beginning to develop in the American colonies, as well. Following the war, conflict between students and university

officials would intensify, leading to a series of events that led Horowitz (1987) to declare, “college life was born in revolt” (p. 23).

2.4.3. Antebellum Period

Following the American Revolution, the number of colleges in the newly-formed republic exploded. When the nation was founded in 1776, there were only nine colleges; by the eve of the Civil War in 1860, the total had climbed to roughly 250 (Lucas, 2006, p. 117). Enrollment growth was also rapid, with the number of young men and women attending college increasing from 1,050 in 1790 to approximately 61,000 by 1869 (Cohen & Kisker, 2010, p. 58). The rapid expansion of state colleges and technical institutions, aided by passage of the Morrill Land Grant Act in 1862, further fueled this growth, resulting in a diversification of higher education institutions in America beyond the residential liberal arts college. As opposed to the colonial period, when each of the original nine institutions were founded in or near large urban centers, the antebellum period saw the rise of many colleges and universities being founded in small, rural towns (Lucas, 2006). It was during this period in history, on April 3, 1856, that St. Lawrence University was founded by the Universalist Church in a rural village in upstate New York (Peters, 1957).

While the residential college structure – with its corresponding dormitories – may have fostered a diverse collection of unique house cultures at Oxford and Cambridge, it was viewed primarily by college administrators in America as a mechanism for control over student life (Lucas, 2006). The daily schedule at many schools in the early 1800’s was tightly regulated, with a full schedule of classes sandwiched between morning and

evening prayer; regular instances of absenteeism and vandalism began to emerge (Lucas, 2006). During this time college life was an “intense and all-encompassing experience” for many, as students often moved far away from home and embraced a shared living experience in an isolated community that “served as a surrogate family and church” (Caple, 1998). The combination of rigid curriculums, tightly controlled schedules, and campuses located in isolated towns ultimately led to multiple student rebellions. In fact, the late 18th and early 19th centuries would ultimately come to be known for a series of violent, disruptive student uprisings, each one being forcibly reigned in through authoritative action by faculty and university administration (Horowitz, 1987; Lucas, 2006; Rudolph, 1990; Thelin, 2004).

According to Horowitz (1987), none of the New England colleges were without student revolts between 1820 and 1860. At Princeton, students disturbed morning prayers one day by intentionally scrapping their boots against the rough church floor; when the President expelled three individuals for this behavior, students rioted for what they perceived as excessive punishment and, “shot pistols, crashed brickbats against walls and doors, and rolled barrels filled with stones along the hallways of Nassau Hall, the principal college building” (Horowitz, 1987, p. 24). One of the expelled students later returned to campus and assaulted the tutor whom he suspected to be the individual who reported him to college officials; this retaliatory incident led to a second student riot that ended only after the President threatened to close the college (Horowitz, 1987). During this same time period, Yale experienced similar turmoil when students bombed a residence hall; in a separate incident, a tutor at Yale was killed when trying to break up a

fight between students (Horowitz, 1987). Outside of New England, at the University of North Carolina, it has been documented that students, “horsewhipped the president, stoned two professors, and threatened the other members of the faculty with personal injury” (Horowitz, 1987, p. 25). It is clear that by the late 18th century American youth in college had divided into two basic paths – college men and outsiders; later in the early 20th century, a third student subculture developed, collegiate rebellion (Horowitz, 1987).

Student extracurricular activities also evolved during this period of higher education. Throughout the early years of the antebellum period, religious groups formed the core social organizations on campus (Lucas, 2006). Soon literary societies, debate clubs, and other secular activities began to overtake religious groups as the most popular activities on campus (Lucas, 2006). What emerged is “a remarkable pattern of student life in which undergraduates...created an elaborate world of their own within and alongside the official world of the college” (Thelin, 2004, p. 65). In 1750, the first student-organized literary society was founded at the College of William & Mary, followed by the Phi Beta Kappa honor society in 1776 (Horowitz, 1987). These initial efforts at secular social groups would soon give way to Greek life. On November 26, 1825, the Kappa Alpha Society was established at Union College and is credited as the first Greek letter social fraternity in the United States (Horowitz, 1987). This was followed shortly thereafter by the Sigma Phi Society in March 1827 and Delta Phi in November 1827; these three organizations would come to be known as the “Union Triad” (Horowitz, 1987). The formation of secret social fraternities quickly spread to other institutions across the northeast, ushering in the arrival of Greek Life to American higher

education. As early as the 1830's, fraternities had also formed on the campuses of Amherst, Bowdoin, Brown, Columbia, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Wesleyan, and elsewhere (Lucas, 2006). The formation of literary societies, fraternity life, and other secular student organizations was a direct response to the dominant structure of residential college life in America at the time, whereby students felt they had no control over their educational experience (Horowitz, 1987). In the latter half of the 19th Century, the emergence of athletics – in particular, football – would also contribute to the development of organized, secular extracurricular activities and how students perceived their individual connections and identities with their schools.

In practically every case at every campus, student-led rebellion efforts followed a scripted life cycle. Initially, students would identify a particular grievance; in some instances, they would seek change from university administration in a direct way – and revolt if their demands were ignored (Horowitz, 1987). In other cases, students would formulate alternative social activities as a means to gain agency over their college experience. This activity would often be developed in an informal context and eventually gain sustained popularity, thereby attract the attention of university administrators who would attempt to either abolish or control the activity (Rudolph, 1990). Such top-down efforts to control student behavior often failed, resulting in the activity resurfacing as a “renegade organization” and the administration trying to identify a way to assimilate it into the formal structure of the college (Rudolph, 1990).

2.4.4. The Industrial Revolution & Educational Reform

Some historians have argued collegiate life went into decline immediately following the Civil War, citing a decrease in college enrollment figures (Thelin, 2004). On the contrary, strong evidence suggests the student experience on college campuses thrived. Bruce Leslie conducted a study analyzing collegiate life at Bucknell, Princeton, Swarthmore, and Franklin & Marshall between 1865 and 1917. Leslie's (1992) research showed evidence of a flourishing campus life dynamic during this time period, with students continuing to form social organizations and creating their own intricate, compelling world within the aforementioned formal, rigid college structure. The autobiography of Lyman Bagg, who graduated from Yale in 1869, also paints the portrait of a vibrant 19th century college life. Similar to the institutions outlined in Leslie's study, Bagg (1871) details a multitude of organized activities, along with unique customs and rituals, all intersecting to create a cohesive institutional culture. As explained by Lucas (2006), many students entering college at the turn of the 20th century viewed the college experience as "a pleasant interlude between the end of adolescence and the assumption of adult responsibilities...little more than a prolonged childhood: a time to develop friendships, to socialize, and to indulge in good fun" (p. 208). The majority of students did not enter college expecting to work hard, did not study in a particularly rigorous way, and most did not attend class on a regular basis (Lucas, 2006). Student activism increased in the early 20th century, with students marching in protest against rearmament and America's involvement in World War I; this was followed by depression era protests involving immigration and free speech (Lucas, 2006). This early activism would prove to be a precursor to the radical student movements of the 1960's focusing on civil rights

and opposition to the Vietnam War. It was also during this time when most colleges and universities across the country settled into the traditional four-year academic curriculum widely utilized to this day, with students forming close affiliations with their entering class years of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors (Thelin, 2004).

During this period in history initial steps were taken to establish what would ultimately become college student personnel work, commonly known today as the Division of Student Life or Student Affairs at most institutions. In 1870, Harvard College appointed Ephraim Gurney to an academic dean position that also assumed the responsibility of discipline adjudication from the President's office; this appointment is commonly recognized as the first step in the evolution of structured college personnel work (Caple, 1998). A few years later, in 1890, the Board of Freshman Advisors was established at Harvard, establishing a structure that Brubacher & Rudy (1976) describe as dividing the deanship "into appointments that essentially created a division of labor between an academic dean and a dean of student affairs" (as cited in Caple, 1998). According to Caple (1998), student personnel work originated and grew at other colleges as part of the progressive education reform movement and continued to reflect "much of the reform and progressive spirit as it continued to develop" (p. 15). At the turn of the 20th century non-instructional staff started to become a more prominent part of the higher education landscape. The first non-instructional staff were assigned to managing the essential college functions of student conduct or housing; other functions such as career centers and health and counseling would begin to emerge in the following years (Caple, 1998).

The formal college personnel movement would ultimately solidify following the release of two milestone documents – *The Student Personnel Point of View*, published by the American Council on Education (ACE) in 1937, in addition to a 1949 revision of this document commissioned by ACE and formulated by a committee of twelve student personnel practitioners and faculty. The philosophy of this document still resonates to this day in stating:

The student personnel point of view encompasses the student as a whole. The concept of education is broadened to include attention to the student in well-rounded development – physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually as well as intellectually. The student is thought of as a responsible participant in his own development and not as a passive recipient of an imprinted economic, political, or religious doctrine, or vocational skill. As a responsible participant in the societal processes of our American democracy, his [sic] full and balanced maturity is viewed as a major end-goal of education and, as well, a necessary means to the fullest development of his fellow-citizens. From the personnel point of view any lesser goal falls short of the desired objective of democratic educational processes, and is a real drain and strain upon the self-realization of other developing individuals in our society (ACE, 1949, p. 1-2).

It is important to highlight the commonalities between this document and the foundational aspirations of St. Lawrence University's FYP, as both seek to engage students in holistic and meaningful ways while at the same time preparing them to be actively engaged citizens upon graduation. However, it is equally important to note the cultural impact of ACE's statement; according to Doyle (2004), it also "finalized the separation of faculty and student personnel workers, a separation that had been developing gradually over the previous 100 years" (p. 69).

2.4.5. The Post-War Era

The time period between 1945 and 1975 is often referred to by historians as the 'Golden Age' of higher education. The economy of the United States was booming

following an Allied victory in World War II, while thousands of G.I.'s were returning from battle and now had the ability to attend college for free with the passage of the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, more commonly known as the G.I. Bill. Between 1940 and 1950, student enrollment grew from 1.5 million to almost 2.7 million students – an increase of approximately 80% in 10 years (Thelin, 2004, p. 261). By the 1960's, the 'baby boomer' generation started to attend college, further fueling enrollment growth. Additionally, federal and state governments were funneling significant resources into higher education. The face of the American college student also started to shift during this time period, with white men no longer dominating the majority of campus populations in the same way they had previously. Between 1970 and 1991, the number of women attending college doubled, while students from underrepresented groups – particularly the Hispanic population – grew at a significant rate, as well (Lucas, 2006). These factors all contributed to unprecedented growth in higher education, with student enrollment increasing from 1,677,000 in 1945 to 11,185,000 by 1975 – a phenomenal growth rate of more than 665% (Cohen & Kisker, 2010).

College campuses across the nation were overwhelmed with an influx of students following World War II, many of whom were veterans. This significant demographic shift in enrollment had an impact on several facets of campus life. First, more housing was needed. This resulted in many campuses scrambling to build make-shift structures. St. Lawrence University was no exception, with the college building the once-famous "Vets-ville" housing complex on the present-day athletic fields of the campus. Perhaps more importantly, the arrival of so many former G.I.'s had a dramatic impact on student

culture, as they tended to be older, more mature, and politically conservative. Many of these former G.I. students were also married with children and focused on hard work and completing their degree quickly (Thelin, 2004). According to Horowitz (1987) “their older, dominant voice commanded respect” (p. 220). The short-term, immediate impact of the G.I. Bill was the ushering in of a brief era during the 1950’s and early 1960’s labeled the “silent generation” (Lucas, 2006). This was a time period of stability and conformity within the student culture – and it would not last long.

The mid-to-late 1960’s proved to be a pivotal period in higher education. The election of John F. Kennedy, his subsequent assassination in 1963, the Civil Rights Movement, the emerging conflict in Vietnam, and the deaths of Malcom X, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy all conspired to foster a sense of activism in students across the country. According to Horowitz (1987), at the height of the student protest movement in 1969, approximately 28% of the student population had taken part in a demonstration at some point during their collegiate experience (p. 223). In 1964, students at Berkley protested on the grounds of free speech after the university banned use of property that had often been used as a meeting place for political groups (Lucas, 2006). In 1968, the administration building at Columbia University was seized by students in opposition to the institution’s plans to gentrify a predominantly black neighborhood near the school and build a new gymnasium (Lucas, 2006). In 1969, African-American students at Cornell University occupied the Student Center in response to a cross-burning incident on campus (Blankman et al., 1987). The adversarial nature of the student protest movement can be seen in a 1969 Gallup Poll in which “the vast

majority of adults in the country favored a hard line against campus disrupters” (Blankman et al., 1987, p. 111). The student activism movement reached a high point in the summer of 1968, receiving national attention at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago as the world witnessed violent protests play out on national television (Lucas, 2006). Unlike earlier protest movements, the events of the 1960’s involved not only outsider and rebel subcultures, yet also included the traditional “college men” and “college women,” as well – an inclusive dynamic that would fundamentally change student culture (Horowitz, 1987). In the past, college life had “normally been politically neutral or even conservative, intent on separating the campus from the rest of society” (Horowitz, 1987, p. 236). However, the radicalization of political thought is what ultimately separated the 1960’s from previous protest efforts of past generations of students.

According to Horowitz (1987), following the tragic student deaths at Kent State and Jackson State College in May 1970, the campus protest movement of the 1960’s came to an abrupt end. When students returned to campus that following fall, their collective energies were directed largely to academics. Yale President Kingman Brewster characterized the attitudes of college students in the 1970’s as, “grim professionalism” (Horowitz, 1987). Furthermore, intense conflict between students and administration throughout the previous decade had resulted in most colleges and universities loosening their rigid oversight of social policies and morals, leaving students to experiment relatively freely with drugs, alcohol, and sex (Horowitz, 1987). This culture of apathy dominated the college landscape of the 1970’s and 1980’s, as the

“demand that life and learning join was no longer heard...and students separated their private pleasures from academic work” (Horowitz, 1987, p. 20). Additionally, by this time most colleges and universities had developed comprehensive divisions of student affairs practitioners, yet these professionals were often viewed by faculty as bureaucracies who “either [controlled] students who demonstrated inappropriate behavior or [protected] students who were unable to take responsibility for their lives” (Doyle 2004, p. 69). It was within this backdrop of history that the faculty of St. Lawrence began working together to develop the “Freshman Program” that would ultimately be adopted in the fall of 1986.

2.4.6. Academic Curriculum: The Evolving Definition of Scholarship

In addition to adopting the residential college system, universities in colonial America also borrowed heavily from the Oxford and Cambridge model when developing their academic curriculums. Each of the founding nine colonial universities offered a “rigid liberal learning curriculum” aimed at preparing members of the clergy, as well as future political leaders, with the goal being to “foster among all students a common social, moral, and intellectual life” (Lucas, 2006, p. 111). This first phase of scholarship in American higher education resulted in colleges focusing on building character and preparing students for religious and civic leadership (Boyer, 1990).

At the turn of the 19th century, American universities began to experiment with different course offerings. These efforts were prompted in part by the developing post-Revolutionary War economy in America (Thelin, 2004). The field of higher education began to diversify beyond the traditional liberal arts college, with technical colleges

focusing on career preparation beginning to form. This started in 1824, when Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (R.P.I.) was founded in Troy, NY – itself “a constant reminder that the United States needed railroad-builders, bridge-builders, builders of all kinds, and that the institution in Troy was prepared to create them even if the old institutions were not” (Rudolph, 1990, p. 229).

In addition to outside pressure, internal conversations on college campuses also facilitated these changes. These discussions focused on the following questions: How can a liberal arts education best serve society’s needs? Should it continue to offer a uniform curriculum based on the classics, or expand course offerings and incorporate some degree of professional preparedness? In response to this debate, and the perception that Greek and Latin were “dead languages,” President Jeremiah Day of Yale convened a committee to specifically address this issue (Lucas, 2006). The resulting document, the Yale Report of 1828, was a “spirited, closely reasoned defense of the traditional classic education,” rejecting the notion that undergraduate education should include professional studies or offer variations based on personal preference or interests. (Lucas, 2006, p. 133). This was a hot topic of debate at the time, and the Yale Report proved to be an incredibly well-regarded document with many educational leaders at the time supporting its principal argument; this conservative stance ultimately proved to be a set-back for curricular reform in American liberal arts colleges for several decades (Lucas, 2006). This debate and the evolving definition of scholarship is important, as student rebellion in the United States can be traced to the shift in curriculum. The eventual “new learning” of mathematics and natural science “reshaped the course of study and introduced the radical

notion that the mind could discover the unknown” (Horowitz, 1987, p. 26). In other words, “the curriculum had shifted from explaining the ways of God to exploring the ways of man” (Rudolph, 1990, p. 57).

Following the Civil War, the country experienced the industrial revolution. Accompanying this was a massive expansion of urbanization and a fundamental shift in the workforce demands of the economy. Young adults started to flock to cities and take a stronger interest in an education that best met their perceived needs in this new industrialized world (Lucas, 2006). Once again, the question of scholarship and the role of the university in society were questioned. As Lucas (2006) contends, a major theme surrounding this discussion was “the practicality or utility of knowledge and the importance of linking academic learning to professional practice” (p. 150). By the turn of the 20th century, the concept of an elective curriculum had won over as the dominant paradigm (Thelin, 2004). Schools across the country were quickly shifting to such a format, with increasing choice in coursework leading to the development of ‘majors’ and ‘minor’ study concentrations – as well as the development of academic departments devoted exclusively to specific disciplines and scholarly focus (Lucas, 2006). During this same time colleges and universities began formulating the current hierarchical systems of academic rank. As described by Lucas (2006), this system started “at the bottom with instructors, and ascending to assistant professors, then associate professors, and, finally, full professors” (p. 185). By 1910, a Ph.D. had essentially become a requirement for appointment to a professorship at a major university (Duke, 1996). While this shift to a diversified curriculum and faculty professionalism did provide more

choice to students and allowed for more individual control in the short-term, the “silo” effect these changes ultimately had on institutional culture at many institutions over the course of the next 100 years proved to have a profoundly significant effect.

Corresponding with the shift to an elective-based curriculum and individualized academic departments was a movement in scholarship that focused on research over teaching. The founding of John Hopkins University in 1876, and its mission of instituting the German ideal of “advanced scholarship” is credited for initiating this trend in America (Thelin, 2004). The Morrill Act of 1862, and its commitment to funding large land grant universities across the country, further enabled this split in scholarship focus. By the early 1900’s, most large universities and public institutions had moved to this research-dominated model. This shift in scholarship is detailed in Laurence Veysey’s 1965 seminal work, *The Emergence of the American University*; itself an abbreviated version of Veysey’s 1,500-page dissertation he wrote between 1959 and 1961 while he was a doctoral candidate at University of California, Berkley. Veysey (1965) documents the transition of higher education between 1865 and 1910 and argues that during this period of history the university evolved and ultimately shaped itself into the familiar structure we know today. Specifically, the focus of scholarship at most American universities shifted away from teaching and developing close relationships with students, and moved toward research (Veysey, 1965). However, many liberal arts colleges continued to focus on teaching instead of research. Lucas (2006) contends this decision on the part of private liberal arts colleges was due to the fact they “lacked the resources needed to transform themselves into institutions dedicated more to generating knowledge

than simply to transmitting it” (p. 195). A slight shift in the elective approach to curriculum also happened in the early 1900’s, as a major “concentration” was now complimented by “distribution” credits spread out over other academic areas of study the college offers – a structure very similar to what many modern liberal arts colleges utilize today (Thelin, 2004).

By the 1980’s, scholars once again began to question the role of higher education and if it was best meeting the educational needs of students. When discussing this period of higher education history, it is imperative to mention the work of Ernest Boyer. Working on behalf of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Boyer performed extensive research and wrote two books in the 1980’s focusing on scholarship. His first book, *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America*, argues scholarship is the heart of higher education and sought to “pay particular attention to the way the structures and procedures of colleges affect the lives of students” (Boyer, 1987, p. xi). Through a survey of 5,000 faculty members, 1,310 chief academic officers, a random sample of 4,500 undergraduate students, and a random sample of 1,187 high school students, Boyer (1987) found that positive experiences outside the classroom are sometimes misunderstood and are often not emphasized enough. This key finding led Boyer (1987) to frame the fundamental question of scholarship as, “How do we define work of faculty in ways that enrich, rather than restrict, the quality of campus life?”

The challenges Boyer identified in *College* still exist today. First, he describes how disconnects exist between K-12 education and higher education, leading to significant transition issues for incoming first-year students when they enter college

(Boyer, 1987). Specifically, the academic and social challenges facing students as they shift from high school to college receive relatively little attention from policy makers or educational leaders at the K-12 level or within higher education. Second, Boyer (1987) argues there is “confusion over goals,” with the long-standing conflict “between careerism and the liberal arts” causing many colleges to be unfocused in their curriculum and course offerings (p. 3). Boyer followed-up his first book with *Scholarship Reconsidered* in 1990, providing a new vision for scholarship focusing on advancing knowledge, interdisciplinary education, dynamic learning, and inspired teaching (Boyer 1990). This approach to scholarship attempts to strike a healthy balance between a commitment to research and teaching, while at the same time identifying pedagogy supporting the developmental needs of students – as well as the complex demands of an ever-evolving world.

Looking at potential next steps in scholarship and pedagogy, it is worth discussing the work of Nash and his concept of *crossover pedagogy*. Recognizing that meaningful learning happens both in and out of the classroom, this non-traditional approach to structuring the educational experience proposes faculty and student affairs administrators work collaboratively together in ways that maximize student engagement – which may not currently be possible due to traditional structures of the academy. Nash, Jang, & Nguyen (2016) make the fundamental assumption that neither faculty nor administrators have total control over the teaching and learning process; they also assume that, “in a reciprocal partnership the job of educating students to do, and to be, all that is possible for them is much more likely to happen when the two groups can work together as

crossover educators” (p. 7). Nash et al. (2016) identify the two major, long-term educational goals of crossover pedagogy as helping students make “real-world, life-changing connections” (p. 9) between learning and their post-graduate life, and to help students with all levels of their personal development so they may create meaning in their lives. They do acknowledge, however, this concept is not intended to be a natural fit at every college or university, yet rather an “experimental possibility for those faculty members and administrators who would like to combine their specialized backgrounds – knowledge, skills, and experiences – in some creative ways to teach and mentor students” (Nash, Jang, & Ngueyn, 2016, p. 4). Given the amount of collaboration that is currently required in many living-learning programs, the concept of crossover pedagogy is an intriguing concept for many institutions seeking to maximize the student experience to consider.

2.4.7. Guiding Philosophies of the Student Affairs Profession

Since the focus of this study is living-learning communities, the perspective of student affairs administrators is also important to consider. I will outline three main guiding philosophies that have driven college student personnel practitioners throughout the 20th century and beyond – student services, student development, and student learning. Doyle (2004) argues the two older philosophies, student services and student development, have each witnessed a “rise, dominance, and fall” over the course of recent history, with each having now given way to an emerging guiding philosophy of student learning (p. 66). The original “student services” approach viewed student affairs practitioners as serving a supplemental role to faculty, primarily supporting the academic

mission of the institution by providing basic services necessary to ensure students are ready for classroom learning (Doyle, 2004). Partly in response to the student protest movements of the 1960's, this focus shifted when the Committee on the Student in Higher Education issued a statement in 1968 declaring student development as the new guiding framework for student personnel practitioners (Doyle, 2004). This decree would be solidified by Robert Brown's 1972 book, *Student Development in Tomorrow's Higher Education: A Return to the Academy* (Caple, 1996). The rationale behind this philosophical shift was that by embracing a theoretical foundation distinct from other academic disciplines – in this case, human development theory – student affairs practitioners would gain legitimacy in the eyes of faculty and be treated as equals (Doyle, 2004). Unfortunately, an unintended consequence of the student development movement was many student affairs practitioners in the 1970's and 1980's sought to reinvigorate higher education on their terms and viewed faculty as part of the “problem” (Caple, 1996; Doyle, 2004). Furthermore, evidence now suggests the student development paradigm often separated a student's emotional and social development from their intellectual development, thereby doing little to pragmatically support the educational mission of many colleges and universities (Allen & Garb, 1993). This ultimately fostered an adversarial “us-versus-them” cultural dynamic on many college campuses between faculty and student affairs divisions.

In the early 1990's, the guiding philosophy of “student learning” started to gain traction. The student learning paradigm is defined by Doyle (2004) as one that seeks to “establish a seamless learning experience through shared and integrated efforts between

student affairs and other educators and administrators” (p. 77). The student learning movement was shaped by mounting critiques of student development, as well as the research of George Kuh et al. (1991) and their book, *Involving Colleges: Successful Approaches to Fostering Student Learning and Development Outside of the Classroom*. It outlined a study focusing on fourteen four-year colleges and universities that created intellectually engaging environments outside the classroom. While Kuh et al. (1991) focused on student engagement rather than learning, they argued engagement was a bi-product of effective student learning. They also defined “educational” as a “broader set of ideas that embrace moral and social development in addition to the development of intellect and reason” (Kuh et al., 1991, p. 17). This philosophical framework guides many contemporary student affairs efforts today and is discussed later in this chapter.

Another key contributing document to the discussion of scholarship and guiding student affairs philosophies is *Learning Reconsidered: A Campus-Wide Focus on the Student Experience*. This document is a joint research effort between the two contemporary student affairs professional organizations in America, the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA). This joint report argues learning is a comprehensive, holistic, and transformative experience requiring the integration of both academic learning & student development (Keeling, Ed., 2004). In fact, Keeling et al. (2004) defines learning as “a comprehensive, holistic, transformative activity that integrates academic learning and student development,” specifically explaining learning and development should not be mentioned separately since “learning and student

development are fundamentally different things...[and one could not] occur without the other” (p. 4). Keeling et al. (2004) concludes by advocating for scholarship fostering cognitive complexity, enhancing knowledge acquisition and application, advancing humanitarianism, and helping students become engaged, practical citizens with strong interpersonal and intrapersonal competence – all through pedagogies informed by student development. This initial effort was followed-up by *Learning Reconsidered 2: A Practical Guide to Implementing a Campus-Wide Focus on the Student Experience*. In this second document, Keeling et al. (2006) explored in greater depth the concepts in *Learning Reconsidered*, while also providing examples of collaborative work student affairs practitioners in the field had successfully accomplished. With an emphasis on how to best implement such collaborative efforts, Keeling et al. (2006) concluded that the key hurdle was “gaining consensus that student learning is so important that faculty, staff, and administrators will be willing to climb outside of comfort of their silos and reinvent higher education” (p. 65). The work of ACPA and NSAPA in *Learning Reconsidered* is relevant to this study, as the intersection between academics and student affairs was a central component in the creation and development of the FYP.

2.5. History of Living-Learning Programs

Residential colleges in America are based heavily on the English models of higher education. Most European medieval universities were initially defined not by their location, but as an organized collection of faculty and students; these early universities did not have buildings, residence halls, or central campuses. In fact, as late as the 13th century, it was not uncommon for European centers of higher learning to move

periodically from one location to another; collections of faculty and students would relocate to a different village if town-gown issues between students and local residents in their current community got out of hand (Lucas, 2006). Cambridge University, for example, was founded in 1209 after a group of faculty separated from Oxford University following a riot between townsfolk and students – an incident during which a local woman was allegedly killed by students, ultimately leading to two or three individuals being hanged (Lucas, 2006).

It was the residential aspect of college life that ultimately led English universities to shed their patterns of frequent mobility. Specifically, the development of endowed residential halls, or colleges, started to become more common (Lucas, 2006). These residential colleges within a university system were developed out of the perceived need to establish student housing so rowdy adolescents could be monitored more closely by faculty (Lucas, 2006). The mutual benefits of this close-knit college structure quickly became apparent. As pointed out in research about these changes, students benefited from the common living arrangement, shared meals, and the financial protections afforded by controlled rent, while faculty enjoyed the benefits of a residential structure providing adequate supervision, which helped keep students out of trouble and reduced the potential for conflict with local townspeople (Lucas, 2006). Over time, these college systems within the English universities evolved from simple dormitories into an intricate system of relatively autonomous, yet very sophisticated residential environments (Thelin, 2004). Each residential college ultimately offered its own special rights, privileges, traditions, and – perhaps most importantly – its own “distinctive character” or student

culture (Lucas, 2006). This steady progression of privately-endowed colleges within England demonstrates how – even years before the founding of the American colonies – university administrators struggled with managing vibrant student subcultures, yet recognized the inherent strengths of an engaging residential experience.

The basic “Oxbridge” residential model would later be adopted in varying forms by the nine Ivy League colleges originally established in colonial America (Lucas, 2006). In 1819, former President Thomas Jefferson, along with James Madison and James Monroe, established the University of Virginia – an institution which would “stand out as a model and marvel of planning, in both its educational mission and its architecture” (Thelin, 2004, p. 51). Jefferson designed the campus, which featured an “academical village” layout intentionally designed to bring students and faculty together in a shared, close-knit living and learning community. (Thelin, 2004). The curriculum at UVA was ambitious and innovative, as was the student code of conduct, which had input from students (Thelin, 2004). Unfortunately, the aspirations of “Mister Jefferson’s University” and reality did not come to fruition, as the institution mostly attracted wealthy students from southern states who had little interest in fully embracing an interactive, academically-focused living-learning experience (Thelin, 2004). This lack of student engagement was not unique to the University of Virginia. Just like at Oxford and Cambridge, as well as on campuses of liberal arts colleges across the Northeast, traditional college men and women, with their robust social life, continued to dominate student culture in the 19th century (Horowitz, 1987; Lucas, 2006; Rudolph, 1990).

The emergence of the modern American research university in the late 1800's, with its shift in focus toward research and the splintering of academic departments offering distinct "majors" and "minors," made the division between students and faculty even more apparent. Furthermore, several colonial colleges had abandoned the "Oxbridge" residential college model around the turn of the 19th century, as growth in student enrollment had challenged the convenience and value of integrated academic and residential efforts (Chaddock, 2008). Several educational leaders, including University of Chicago's William Rainey Harper and Princeton's Woodrow Wilson, identified a potential renewed focus in the residential college model as a solution to this expanding structural and cultural divide, as they "saw the emulation of the residential traditions of Oxford and Cambridge as a way to reinvigorate undergraduate education in American universities" (Duke, 1996, p. 5). While Wilson failed to persuade wealthy Princeton donors to support his efforts, Harper was able to successfully implement a residential college model when the University of Chicago was founded. During the construction of the campus, in 1892, Harper mandated that over half of the space in the original buildings serve as residence halls; he then augmented this controversial space layout with the "establishment of a house system that was founded on residence halls that were to have their own heads, counselors, and house committees" (Caple, 1998). Several other colleges attempted to reintroduce and institutionalize the residential college model in the early 1900's, with the most prominent and well-known efforts being Harvard's "houses" and Yale's "colleges." (Duke, 1996). In the case of Harvard, their faculty and alumni committed to this model as they "saw the residential college as a way to provide a

coherent social life for an increasingly diverse and nonresidential undergraduate student body” (Duke, 1996, p. 171). Other institutions would soon begin to experiment with residential integration efforts.

The development of courses aimed at supporting student transitions and nurturing academic skills has also evolved over time. The first documented attempt to develop such a course occurred at Brown College in 1914 (Lucas, 2006). Alexander Meiklejohn, the Dean of the College and a Professor of Philosophy, developed an undergraduate survey course titled, *Social and Economic Institutions* (Lucas, 2006). Within a decade, Meiklejohn had developed two different types of survey courses at Brown – one for incoming first-year students, in addition to a capstone course for graduating seniors (Lucas, 2006). As identified by Lucas (2006), Meiklejohn’s goal was to reaffirm the humanistic perspective of a liberal arts education, which he explained by stating:

The American college is not primarily to teach the forms of living, not primarily to give practice in the art of living, but rather to broaden and deepen...insight into life itself, to open up the riches of the human experience, of literature, of nature, of art, of religion, of philosophy, of human relations, social, economic, political, to arouse an understanding and appreciation of these, so that life may be fuller and richer in content; in a word, the primary function of the American college is the arousing of interests. (p. 188-189)

The second attempt at a common survey course occurred at Columbia University in 1919 and, according to Lucas (2006), proved to be “the most celebrated approach to general education” (p. 222). John Erskine developed a course required of all incoming first-year students at Columbia titled, “Introduction to Contemporary Civilization” (Lucas, 2006). Throughout the 1920’s and 1930’s, several other liberal arts colleges followed Brown and Columbia, experimenting with their curriculums in an effort to account for general

education – most often integrating courses into the first or second year of study (Lucas, 2006). As these general education courses started to gain popularity, they were not met without resistance, as some faculty charged that such additions to the curriculum were shallow, superficial, and lacked depth (Lucas, 2006). However, most colleges at this time chose to offer strictly academic curriculums with no attempt at integrating a residential component.

The first living-learning program (LLP) was established by Meiklejohn. He would eventually leave Brown College to serve as President of Amherst College during World War I, before founding the “Experimental College” at the University of Wisconsin in 1927 (Benjamin, 2015). Despite only lasting for five years, from 1927-1932, the Experimental College is described by Inkelas & Soldner (2012) as the “progenitor of the modern living-learning program” (p. 14), with students enrolling in a two-year common curriculum featuring team teaching, clustered classes, and shared residential and dining facilities for students.

The concept of LLPs enjoyed a renaissance in the 1950’s and 1960’s. During this time, at least 44 colleges across the nation adopted such a model, while a national conference was held in March 1967 focusing specifically on the future of the “cluster college” concept (Duke, 1996). The most ambitious undertakings of the LLP concept occurred at newly-established institutions (Smith, 2011). The two most prominent examples of this were the founding of University of California Santa Cruz in 1965 and Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington in 1967. Santa Cruz eschewed traditional academic departments by embracing separate residential colleges as the

fundamental organizational units on campus (Duke 1996). U.C. Santa Cruz would ultimately offer 10 separate, self-contained residential colleges, each featuring a community of 20-90 faculty members working closely with between 750 and 1,550 students; each college also featured separate housing, academic, and recreational facilities possessing its own architecturally distinct design (Office of the Registrar, UC Santa Cruz, 2006). At Evergreen, a curriculum was established wherein students enrolled in interdisciplinary coordinated studies programs rather than traditional courses, and these programs focused on real-world problems (Shapiro & Levine, 1999). At this same time, several large research universities established smaller residential colleges (Smith, 2011). The University of Vermont was the first such institution to construct residence halls dedicated specifically to a LLP, with their Living-Learning Center launching in fall 1973 (Magnarella, 1975). According to Magnarella (1975), the mission of UVM's new LLP was to "integrate student academic and social life" (p. 1) while also "providing a university-wide facility and medium for the development of educational programs that test innovative delivery mechanisms and/or promote positive, aggressive attitudes toward learning" (p. 63).

The development of the modern first-year seminar course is generally credited to University of South Carolina's *Freshman Year Experience* (FYE). Launched in 1974 as "UN101" by James Gardner, this course was initially an attempt by USC President Thomas F. Jones to implement a curricular human relations approach to controlling student unrest following the turbulent 1960's (Watts, 1999). Watts completed her doctoral dissertation at Queen's University by chronicling the history of the University of

South Carolina FYE program from 1962-1990. According to Watts (1999), Gardner's course embraced the humanistic concept of general studies – like that of Meiklejohn's undergraduate survey course at Brown College –while at the same time implementing introductory research methods into the course. However, many USC department faculty rejected UN101, with the result at University of South Carolina being a further fragmentation of academic specialization and a lack of collegiality (Watts, 1999). This resistance was also not unlike earlier instances of faculty conflict at Brown and Columbia when general education seminar courses were first introduced. However, the FYE did have a positive impact on student retention as it “humanized the transition of first-year students into university culture” (Watts, 1999, p. ii), therefore making it popular with student affairs professionals and administrators at the institution. The faculty at St. Lawrence would start discussions just a few years later, in the early 1980's, about establishing a first-year LLP of their own. The success of UN101 would later prompt the University of South Carolina and James Gardner to found the Nation Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.

2.6. Living-Learning Programs

Living-learning programs (LLPs) have been defined as any program in which students, “live together on campus, take part in a shared academic endeavor, use resources in their residence environment designed specifically for them, and have structured social activities in their residential environment that stress academics” (Inkelas, Zeller, Murphy & Hummell, 2006, p. 11). However, it is vital for this study to go far beyond a basic definition and identify how these programs started, what research-

based theory drives their missions, values, and goals, and what is currently known about successful implementation strategies. The literature outlined here, consisting of twelve literary works, will seek to establish a deep understanding of these aspects of the LLP movement. First, I will outline earlier research efforts that provided much of the foundational theory supporting the LLP concept. I will then discuss two prominent national studies on LLPs, Inkelas & Associates' (2008) National Study of Living-Learning Programs (NSLLP) as well as the Study of Integrated Living-Learning Programs (SILLP) led by Mayhew et al. (2016). I will conclude by discussing research focusing on the implementation of learning communities.

2.6.1. Foundational Research for LLPs

Around the same time Meiklejohn and others were beginning to establish general seminar courses to better support student transitions and nurture academic skills, the work of Dewey was emerging as a prominent voice in the field of education. While his work focused primarily on K-12 education reform, Dewey (1902) did call for a greater integration of “general education” or “general culture,” arguing there was a lack of cohesion within the disjointed programs of study offered at the time. What was needed was a curricular approach providing a larger frame of reference for students, effectively integrating areas of study in a holistic way so interdisciplinary connections could be more easily identified and absorbed by students (Dewey, 1902). A fundamental assumption of Dewey's (1902) work is the concept that the school is a “social center” of a community, thereby making the individual and society inextricably linked, which should be accounted for when educating youth (p. 73). There are many parallels between the work of Dewey

and Meiklejohn, as both viewed schools “as important laboratories for democratic citizenship” (Smith, 2011, p. 2). According to Caple (1998), the work of Dewey would also provide a theoretical framework for much of early college student personnel movement in the decades to come.

In the 1970’s, Astin’s ground-breaking work on student engagement reinforced how living on campus has a positive effect on individual persistence and aspirations. His longitudinal, multi-institutional study included over 300 colleges and universities and surveyed over 200,000 students. With his findings, Astin (1977) demonstrated positive experiences in the residence halls lead to an increase in student involvement with co-curricular activities, academic involvement, and faculty-student interactions, all of which foster a higher level of individual student satisfaction. These findings provided further support to the LLP movement.

The work of Tinto, focusing on student departure, built off Astin’s findings by reinforcing the importance of student engagement. Just as relationships are a fundamental building block of institutional culture, they also form the basis of why students choose to stay or leave a college or university. Tinto (1987) developed what he calls a *Theory of Student Departure* by arguing it is critical for students to successfully integrate into the formal and informal academic and social structures of an institution in order to succeed. In other words, developing deep interpersonal connections with faculty and peers allows students to successfully navigate academic difficulties and resolve educational and occupational goals (Tinto, 1987). Students who fail to do so will likely transfer or drop out of school entirely. The integrated nature of LLPs offer students an

ideal environment to foster these necessary interpersonal connections with the formal and informal academic and social structures of an institution. Tinto followed-up his work on student retention by conducting an important study of LLPs at two very different institutions – the University of Washington and Seattle Central Community College. The findings shed further light in the effectiveness of LLPs, with Tinto (1993) demonstrating that student engagement could be fostered through collaborative learning, and that an academically stimulating academic tone can be purposefully cultivated – regardless of the institutional setting or students involved.

Another prominent research effort in the early 1990's was the work of Pascarella and Terenzini. They reviewed more than 3,000 studies addressing both cognitive and affective outcomes. After an exhaustive meta-analysis, including comparing data between highly competitive institutions and non-“elite” colleges and universities, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) arrived to the following conclusion:

To a certain extent, all of the preceding discussion boils down to the issue of psychological size. With few exceptions, institutional size by itself does not appear to be a salient determinant of student change. There is evidence, however, that size is indirectly influential through the kinds of interpersonal relations and experiences it promotes or discourages. (p. 654)

Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) went on to identify programs such as “cluster colleges and other purposeful housing arrangements” (p. 654) as structural changes that appear to make a difference. This research influenced more colleges and universities, particularly larger research universities, to implement LLPs.

When discussing student engagement, it is vital to mention the work of Kuh. At roughly the same time Astin, Tinto, and Pascarella and Terenzini were enhancing the

knowledge in this field, Kuh, Schuh, Whit, & Associates (1991) published their book *Involving Colleges*. This qualitative study involved 14 colleges and sought to “discover institutional factors and conditions that promote student learning and personal development” (Kuh et al., 1991, p. 17), and collected almost 1,300 responses from faculty, administrators, and students. The findings reinforced the notion that personal development can be enhanced through student engagement and learning outside of the classroom is a critical component of the college experience (Kuh et al., 1991). Kuh et al. (1991) concluded that institutions needed to make classroom experiences more productive, while also encouraging students to devote more of their time to out-of-class activities that are academically engaging and purposeful. In 1998, Kuh would build off this scholarship and established the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), a widely-used assessment tool of student engagement by colleges and universities. Kuh has since used NSSE (2015) to developed a series of engagement indicators (EIs), as outlined in Table 4. EIs can be achieved through a series of high-impact practices (HIPs), also identified by NSSE. HIPs represent “enriching educational experiences that can be life-changing” (NSSE, 2015) and include curricular innovations such as learning communities, service learning, research with faculty, internships or field experiences, studying abroad, and a culminating senior experience.

Boyer also identified similar characteristics institutions should strive for in his book, *Campus Life: In Search of Community*. Published in 1990, this book outlines the findings of a year-long study where Boyer and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching asked, “What should be the values of a true learning

Table 4: NSSE Engagement Indicators

Theme	Engagement Indicators
Academic Challenge	Higher-Order Learning
	Reflective & Integrative Learning
	Learning Strategies
	Quantitative Reasoning
Learning with Peers	Collaborative Learning
	Discussions with Diverse Others
Experiences with Faculty	Student-Faculty Interaction
	Effective Teaching Practices
Campus Environment	Quality of Interactions
	Supportive Environment

community?” In response, six distinct characteristics were identified; campus communities should be educationally purposeful, open, just, disciplined, caring, and celebrative (Boyer, 1990). First and foremost, a college or university should be educationally purposeful, a “place where faculty and students share academic goals and work together to strengthen teaching and learning” (p. 9). Campuses should also be open and just, wherein all members of the community can feel free to express themselves and the sacredness of each person is honored and diversity is “aggressively pursued” (Boyer, 1990, p. 25). Boyer (1990) also articulated the importance of individuals to accept their obligations to the greater community and for there to be a well-defined governance system that ensures a healthy level of discipline. It is critical for each college or

university to be a caring community, where the well-being of each individual is supported as well as service to others (Boyer, 1990). Finally, Boyer (1990) advocated for institutions to be celebrative communities, where culture is recognized and “the heritage of the institution is remembered and where rituals affirming both tradition and change are widely shared” (p. 55). The work of Kuh and Associates, NSSE, and Boyer each provided cultural characteristics and benchmarks that would prove helpful to many college and universities seeking to improve student learning and engagement through the establishment of LLPs.

2.6.2. National Study of Living-Learning Programs

Throughout the 1990’s and early 2000’s, many studies were conducted on the effectiveness of LLPs. However, the most prominent study thus far on living-learning programs is the National Study of Living-Learning Programs (NSLLP), with Inkelas serving as the primary investigator. The national study began in 2001, with funding provided by the National Science Foundation, the Association of College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I), Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA), and College Student Educators International (ACPA). The NSLLP was designed as a multi-institutional, longitudinal, mixed methods study. To control for bias, the study adopted Astin’s I-E-O model, controlling for several environmental factors (Browner & Inkelas, 2010).

The NSLLP launched its data collection efforts in 2004, with 34 colleges and universities in the United States participating, and almost 24,000 student responses. Participants included students who lived in LLPs, as well as students living in traditional

residence halls. In 2007, a follow-up survey was administered at 49 institutions, with over 22,000 student participants, to obtain longitudinal data. Findings from the 2004 NSLLP were plentiful. Inkelas & Associates (2008) found students who participated in LLPs felt the social and academic transition to college was easier, reported enhanced critical thinking and analysis skills, reported better confidence in college success, were more committed to civic engagement and volunteerism, felt a stronger sense of belonging on their campus, and were less likely to consume alcohol or binge drink than students not involved in LLPs. When asked about future college plans, students in LLPs were more likely to identify interest in participating campus activities identified by NSSE as HIPs. Interestingly, there was no statistically significant differences between student groups in appreciating racial or ethnic diversity (Inkelas & Associates, 2008). The 2007 findings reaffirmed the positive outcomes reported in 2004, with Inkelas & Associates (2008) also stating their “most important finding...has shown that LLPs are thriving and popular institutional innovations” (p. VI-1). However, the 2007 study also reaffirmed there to be no statistically significant difference for appreciation of racial or ethnic diversity, and students from both groups did not report different rates of growth in cognitive complexity, liberal learning, or personal philosophy (Inkelas & Associates, 2008).

The NSLLP has proven to be “the most comprehensive effort to understand the influence of LLPs on undergraduate students” (Inkelas & Associates, 2008). As a result, over a dozen additional publications were produced by researchers associated with NSLLP, greatly expanding understanding of this field of study. Many of these studies focused on further clarifying the positive impact LLPs can provide to community

development and student groups who often struggle to transition into and/or persist in college, including first-generation college students (Inkelas, Daver, Vogt, & Brown Leonard, 2007), students of color (Johnson et al., 2007), and LGBTQ populations (Longerbeam, Inkelas, Johnson, & Lee, 2007). This body of literature solidified LLPs as a high-impact practice, for we now know they facilitate the transition into college life for students while also having a positive impact on the development of critical thinking skills and promotion of volunteerism and civic engagement (Mayhew, Dahl, Youngerman, & Duran, 2016).

Following up on the NSLLP, Mayhew launched the Study of Integrated Living-Learning Programs (SILLP) in 2015. Building off the work of Inkelas & Associates (2008) and utilizing a similar methodology, Mayhew et al. (2016) sought to “further the conversation by assessing the influence of LLPs on the academic, intellectual, and social development of college students” (p. 2). This longitudinal, mixed methods study collected data in 2015 from seven institutions, collecting almost 1,500 student responses. This was followed-up in 2016 by surveying over 2,500 students at 11 colleges and universities. Specifically, Mayhew et al. (2016) found students who lived in LLPs reported a higher likelihood to discuss their academic learning experiences and sociocultural issues with their peers, higher levels of co-curricular engagement, a stronger sense of belonging, and lower rates of binge drinking. Furthermore, LLPs fostered campus climates more supportive of LGBTQ identities and were identified by students as being more supportive residential environments (Mayhew et al., 2016). Many of the

SILLP findings support the conclusions of NSLLP, further demonstrating LLPs to be a high-impact practice.

Most dissertations focusing on LLPs have similar objectives to NSLLP and SILLP, seeking to further clarify the impact of such program on student persistence, academic achievement, or social engagement. This includes the work of Smith (2010), who conducted a mixed methods case study of two residential communities at Syracuse University. One community was an LLP, while the other was a randomly-assigned residential area. Based on longitudinal survey data, as well as qualitative interviews, Smith (2010) found all students created academic and social ties, yet students who lived in LLPs “may be negotiating academic and social ties more concurrently and earlier in their transition to college” (p. 102). This study concluded that structural locations and relationship networks were the most important factors in fostering campus involvement (Smith, 2010). This study helps reinforce the findings of NSLLP and SILLP.

2.6.3. Implementation of Learning Communities

While much of the research has focused the student outcomes associated with LLPs, some literature related to the implementation of learning communities also exists. Notice that much of this work focuses on the more general concept of learning communities, which are not always residentially-based, as opposed to LLPs. Shapiro & Levine have written two separate books on this topic, *Creating Learning Communities* in 1999 and *Sustaining & Improving Learning Communities*, as Shapiro & Levine Laufgraben, in 2004. Shapiro & Levine (1999) discuss the importance of creating campus cultures supportive of learning communities and argue the transformation of

culture “depends on how change is managed on a campus, who authors it, who supports it, and who benefits” (p. 66). Shapiro & Levine (1999) are also credited with being among the first researchers to specifically identify residentially-based LLPs as a distinct type of learning community (from Inkelas et al., 2008). In discussing the challenges associated with creating learning communities, Shapiro & Levine (1999) discuss the fact institutions of higher education are often charged in part with preserving cultural and social norms, therefore making them naturally resistant to change. They also indicate that campus structures related to a learning community may change during the development process (Shapiro & Levine, 1999). In their 2004 book, a chapter authored by Goodsell Love (2004) discusses concepts related to the implementation and sustainability of LLPs. She argues that successful learning communities are efforts striving to be “central to the mission of the institution, that cultivate leadership and ownership by many people in different areas, and that identify, recognize, and reward behaviors congruent with the continued development of the program” (Goodsell Love, 2004, p. 30). This second book also emphasizes the importance of being intentional with the design of an LLP, yet also recognizing learning communities can change over time – thereby reinforcing the concept of flexibility within any sustainable program (Goodsell Love, 2004).

Building off the work of Shapiro and Levine is *Powerful Learning Communities*, authored by Lenning, Hill, Saunders, Solan, & Stokes (2013). This book seeks to identify various strategies institutions have utilized to successfully develop learning communities, and also discusses the importance of collaborative partnerships between

faculty and staff in these efforts. Lenning et al. (2013) identified different types of learning communities, including the concept of a “learning organization,” defined as:

The entire institution succeeds in organizing itself – including the organization-wide culture, leadership, and preponderance of its members throughout – in ways that authentically transform the whole organization into an intentional LC organized to maximize all members’ learning in relation to one or more dimensions of knowledge. (p. 8)

The work of Lenning et al. (2013) also reinforces the importance of taking clear and intentional steps in the design of a learning community while conducting an “environmental scan.” This is a critical step, as learning communities operate within an “external/institutional complex of social, cultural, and physical conditions” (Lenning et al., 2013, p. 42), all of which can positively or negatively influence the design, development, and success of the program. All of this research focusing on the implementation of learning communities is important to understand and consider, as this case study seeks to further the research in this particular field through qualitative inquiry.

A quantitative dissertation study conducted by Seager (2015) at the University of Central Arkansas sought to develop and field-test an assessment instrument for LLPs. In doing so, this research explored questions of successful implementation strategies. Seager (2015) specifically identified “integral components of LLPs that must exist regardless of LLP model and design” (p. 3) in an effort to assist institutions in recognizing the cultural elements present on their campus that may ease the process of developing and implementing an LLP. The finding with the highest mean score in this study indicated strong relationships and collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs was of “extreme importance” (Seager, 2015, p. 58) to an LLP’s success.

Other findings demonstrated how careful program design is also important to the success of an LLP, with mission, values, clear learning outcomes, and intentional integration of curricular and co-curricular activities being necessary foundational components for faculty and staff to consider (Seager, 2015). These findings are relevant to this study, as they help explain how St. Lawrence's FYP was able to excel in certain areas of its development process, yet also struggle in other respects.

2.7. Analysis of Literature

The literature reviewed for this study suggests a dynamic relationship exists between institutional culture and LLPs. As incoming new students enter college, they seek to bond with faculty and peers. Through the development of interpersonal relationships, institutional traditions, attitudes, beliefs, and other cultural implications are transmitted from one generation of students to the next (Newcomb, 1943; Wallace, 1966; Kuh & Whitt, 1988). These formal and informal relationships students form with faculty and peers also have a significant impact on academic performance and if they choose to persist, transfer, or drop out of school (Tinto, 1987). However, faculty, administrators, and students all belong to different subcultures, each holding different historical perspectives, values, assumptions, and beliefs – these differences lead to inherent conflicts between these distinct subcultures (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Tierney, 1988; Bergquist, 1992). Conflict between subcultures has played out in various ways throughout the history of higher education in America, most notably in the form of student behavior responding to perceived attempts by faculty and administrators to “control” their college experience (Rudolph, 1990; Horowitz, 1987; Leslie, 1992; Lucas,

2006; Thelin, 2004). There also exists a long-standing rift between faculty and student affairs administrators, which has inhibited opportunities for “seamless” learning experiences across academic and residential life (Caple, 1996; Doyle, 2004; Nash et al., 2016). Since institutions are composed of such disparate subcultures of faculty, administrators, and students, who are often in conflict, the common organizational structure that best defines higher education is that of “loosely coupled systems” operating largely independent of one another (Weick, 1976).

Living-learning programs (LLPs) are an intentional integration of academic and residential life (Kuh, 1996). With foundational ties going as far back as the colonial “Oxbridge” residential college model, contemporary LLPs can be viewed in many ways as a philosophical “full circle” effort on the part of faculty and student affairs administrators to provide a seamless collegiate environment focused on holistic student learning. In fact, recent literature promoting the concept of close collaborative partnerships and pedagogies delivering holistic educational experiences (Keeling, 2004; Keeling, 2006; Nash et al., 2016) echo many of the democratic themes advocated by early 20th century educators such as Dewey and Meiklejohn.

Extensive research exists showing evidence of positive student outcomes attributable to LLPs, including higher levels of academic and social peer support, a stronger sense of belonging to the university, as well as a higher likelihood of engaging in multicultural experiences or becoming a leader (Schussler & Fierros, 2008; Inkelas & Associates, 2008; Spanierman et al., 2013; Mayhew et al., 2016). However, implementing and sustaining LLPs can be challenging, as institutions of higher education

are naturally resistant to change (Shapiro & Levine, 1999; Watts, 1999). This resistance is caused by the inherent, culturally-based conflicts discussed, as well as the fact that institutions of higher education are often charged in part with preserving cultural and social norms of society.

In order to effectively implement decisions and foster change, educational leaders should possess not only a comprehensive understanding of the external challenges facing their organization and the options available to them, but also strive to develop a complete, nuanced understanding of their own organization's culture and how each decision may be interpreted – and therefore impact – their respective campus community. Only then can they articulate decisions in a way that effectively speak to the perceptions, needs, and desires of the individual and group constituencies whose support they require (Tierney, 1988). This indicates key cultural dimensions of a campus community can be used by administrators to change institutional elements that are out of balance with the predominant culture. The literature on institutional culture – and the implications that changes to group dynamics can successfully foster change – aligns well with the literature of organizational change research. Specifically, strong evidence suggests change efforts focusing on interpersonal relationships are most successful; the core of any issue is always about changing the behavior of people – and highly successful behavior change happens in situations mostly by words and actions that speak to people's feelings (Kotter, 2012). In the end, it's all about people and relationships. To establish a campus environment capable of achieving this capacity, educational leaders should consider adaptive leadership strategies that have shown to foster change in people's priorities,

beliefs, habits, and loyalties (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009). Such changes may ultimately lead to the creation of a true learning organization, wherein people are continually learning together and discovering how they create and change their shared reality is another opportunity (Senge, 1990; Lenning et al. (2013). The culturally-focused approach to change advocated by Tierney (1988) supports these scholarly perspectives of organizational change. Ultimately, successful change efforts can bring divergent subcultures together, create a common vision, and advance what Clark (1970) identifies as the “organizational saga” of a college or university.

A present gap in the literature, as identified by other researchers, is a need for more qualitative inquiry studies on LLPs to establish a more dynamic and informative understanding of such programs (Gahagan & Luna, 2008). Therefore, this case study utilizes a qualitative methodology to illuminate the internal conflicts and cultural implications related to the founding and implementation of a comprehensive LLP aimed at supporting the first-year student transition. Through historical document analysis, as well as narrative inquiry interviews focusing on the fundamental values, basic assumptions, and shared beliefs of the campus community, this case study seeks to understand why this program was founded, how it was ultimately able to sustain within the organization, and identify ways in which its presence has shaped institutional culture for faculty, students, and administrators. The findings of this study demonstrate how preexisting cultural conditions heavily influenced the creation and development of the LLP. This study also identifies the ways in which several deeply entrenched cultural

conditions changed, indicating this comprehensive LLP fostered a relational capacity to facilitate cultural change.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Students face a number of defining challenges during their first year in college. These challenge can be overcome through the personal relationships they develop with faculty and other members of the campus community (Chambliss & Takacs, 2014). It is important for institutions to change in ways that provide a more seamless living-learning experience, thereby enabling students to transition successfully into college life. However, one of the most common challenges facing colleges and universities that seek change is a tendency for institutional culture dynamics to be potentially divisive and foster internal conflict (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Such conflict impacts faculty, students, and administrative subcultures.

One potential solution to the problem of divisive institutional culture dynamics being compounded by structural disconnects of academic and residential life are residentially based living-learning programs (LLPs). As explained by Kuh (1996), LLPs integrate the classroom and residence hall environments, blurring the traditional boundaries between the classroom and co-curricular experience. This integrated residential experience has the capability of facilitating a cohesive cultural bridge between faculty, students, and administrators (Levin Laufgraben, O'Connor, & Williams, 2007). When faculty and administration are able to partner in ways that overcome divisive cultural dynamics, opportunities are created to better educate the whole student and greatly enhance the campus climate (Nash et al., 2016). Unfortunately, institutions of higher education are well-known for being naturally resistant to change; colleges and universities identify strongly with their own cultural heritage and are often charged in

part by society to preserve cultural and social norms (Shapiro & Levine, 1999). It is important for educational leaders to understand these complex, culturally-based conflicts and possess the ability to interpret and overcome these challenges (Tierney, 1988).

This case study provides a thick description of the internal conflict and cultural implications related to the founding and implementation of St. Lawrence University's First-Year Program, a comprehensive LLP aimed at supporting the first-year student transition. Through historical document analysis, as well as qualitative research focusing on the fundamental values, basic assumptions, and shared beliefs of the campus community, this case study seeks to understand why this program was founded, how it was ultimately able to sustain within the organization, and identified ways in which its presence shaped institutional culture for faculty, students, and administrators.

In this chapter, I outline the methodology of the qualitative research conducted in this case study. First, I outline my research questions. Second, I discuss my research paradigm of interpretivism and clarify the value of qualitative methodology. Next, I illustrate the two-phase research design of this study. I then briefly describe the setting and purposefully sampled population selected for this study, and detail my access to the research site. In qualitative research, it is vital for the researcher to demonstrate trustworthiness, dependability, and a solid understanding of the ethical considerations; therefore, I also describe how this study takes active steps to ensure both values are met through carefully planned protocols. I conclude this chapter by outlining my data collection and data analysis methods, as well as describing the delimitations and limitations of this study.

3.1. Research Questions

Two key research questions guide the overall methodology of this study.

Utilizing Kuh & Whitt's (1988) *Framework for Analyzing Culture in Higher Education*, this study seeks to illuminate:

1. How does institutional culture influence the creation and development of an LLP?
2. In what ways can an LLP reciprocally shape institutional culture?

Four sub-questions also guide this study. Based on Schein's (2004) *Conceptual Model for Managed Culture Change*, these sub-questions were utilized as a guiding framework for the interview protocol and helped clarify the focus of relevant content to be researched:

1. What were the institutional culture conditions at St. Lawrence University in the 1970's and 1980's and how did they contribute to the formation of the FYP?
2. Why was a residential college model adopted for the FYP?
3. What cultural factors influenced the implementation and initial development of the FYP?
4. In what ways do faculty and administrators perceive institutional culture conditions have changed at St. Lawrence since the implementation of the FYP?

3.2. Research Paradigm

The research paradigm I embrace in this study is interpretivism. Since paradigms serve as a framework helping the researcher make assumptions about the nature of reality and truth, this interpretivist perspective ultimately shaped the types of questions I explored, as well as the methodology used in this study to answer these questions

(Glesne, 2011). Based on my background and role as a student affairs educator, the axiology of this study embraces the essential value and belief that residential and co-curricular experiences in college can positively shape an individual student's academic and social growth and play a fundamental role in providing a holistic education. Furthermore, through my professional experiences, as well as my review of literature on the topic, I believe LLPs provide an ideal blend of academic and residential experiences and offer the best educational environment for holistic learning opportunities. My personal life experience as a transfer student, as well as a professional who has worked at three separate institutions of higher education, has also taught me that culture can greatly influence the experiences of faculty, students, and administrators. The ontology of this case study is constructivist in nature, thereby subscribing to the concept reality is created by individuals or groups of people; it is socially constructed, complex, and ever changing (Glesne, 2011). The epistemology of this study is interpretivist, meaning this research paradigm aligns with the assumption that all individuals seek to understand their world and that through this process of understanding and perceiving knowledge they develop subjective meanings of their life experiences (Creswell, 2013). The research goal of the interpretivist paradigm is to understand the "social world from the perspective of those actors in that social world," thereby subscribing to research methods focusing on "interacting with people in their social contexts and talking with them about their perceptions" (Glesne, 2011, p. 8). The research questions and methodology of this case study embraces this interpretivist approach.

3.3. Value of Qualitative Methodology

The research in this study is qualitative and I selected this methodology for a number of reasons. First and foremost, a qualitative approach to research aligns with my axiology, ontology, and epistemology. There exists an organic connection between my research paradigm and the natural strengths of qualitative inquiry, as this form of research is pragmatic, interpretive, and grounded in people's lived experiences (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Qualitative strengths thereby enable my research questions, study design, interview protocol, and research findings to focus on the socially constructed cultures, social settings, and interpersonal relationships at the heart of this study.

This dissertation is a case study utilizing the qualitative research approach of narrative inquiry to develop a deep understanding of divisive institutional culture dynamics being compounded by structural disconnects of academic and residential life at one particular institution of higher education. A case study is an "intensive study of a case" wherein that case may be defined as a person, a community, or an event "such as the implementation of a particular program" (Glesne, 2011, p. 22). According to Stake (2000), a case study "is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied" (p. 435). As a researcher, I subscribe to this particular conceptualization of the case study, thereby enabling my narrative inquiry research methodology to focus on the "complexity within the case, on its uniqueness, and its linkages to the social context of which it is a part" (Glesne, 2011, p. 22).

I chose qualitative research as a methodology because narrative researchers must situate individual stories within participants' personal experiences, their culture, and their

historical contexts (Creswell, 2013). Since my research questions focus on the institutional culture and historical context of the case study setting, narrative inquiry is an ideal research approach. As defined by Creswell (2013), narrative inquiry stories are “gathered through many different forms of data, such as through interviews that may be the primary form of data collection, but also through observations, documents, pictures, and other sources of qualitative data” (p. 71). Furthermore, such narratives often contain turning points, characterized by extreme tensions or interruptions, which often play a significant role in shaping individual attitudes and belief structures (Creswell, 2013). This particular research methodology goes beyond a basic semi-structured interview format; if performed well, narrative inquiry research has the capacity to “illustrate the uniqueness, dilemmas, and complexities of a person in such a way that it causes readers to reflect upon themselves and to bring their own situations and questions to the story” (Glesne, 2011, p. 20). This methodology and outcome is desirable, as the concluding research question of this study specifically seeks to assist other college administrators who seek to plan and implement programs for positive organizational change at their respective institutions.

3.4. Research Design

The research design of this case study is qualitative narrative inquiry and will consist of two phases – a process of archival material and historical research analysis followed by a series of in-depth interviews. This structure is illustrated in Figure 3. The first step of my research consists of archival material review and historical research analysis. This initial phase of the research design was chosen because in order

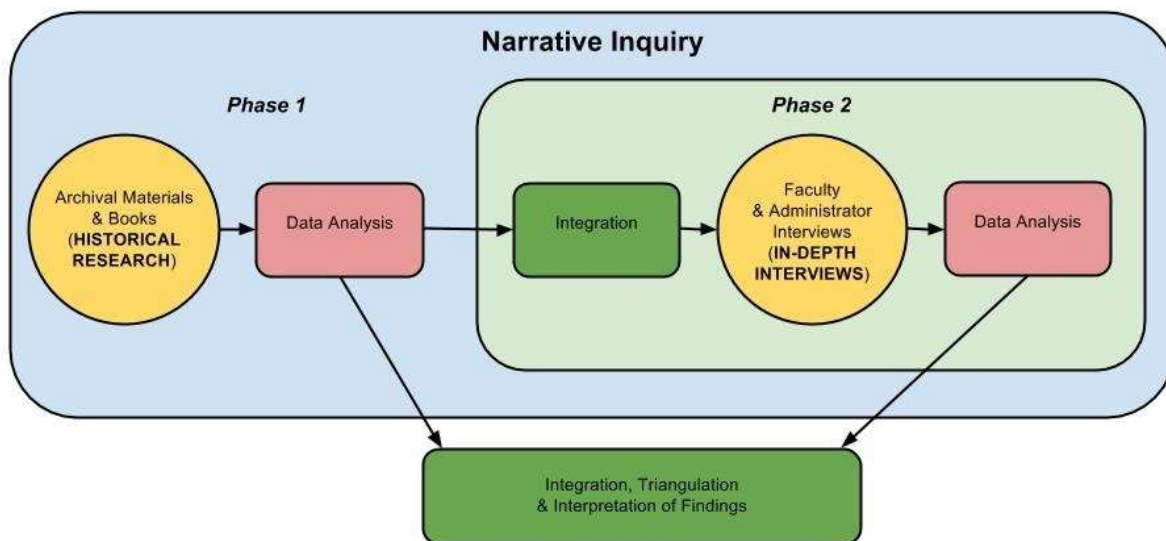


Figure 3: Research Design

to best understand a phenomenon, you need to know its history (Glesne, 2011). Through the use of historical document and artifact analysis, I explored the history of St. Lawrence University and its First-Year Program (FYP). This initial phase of research focused on identifying tangible facts, including key dates and people. It also identified a clear chronological order of events relevant to this case study. Archival materials on file in St. Lawrence University's Library, as well as the Office of the First Year Program were reviewed. These documents include archival materials such as Faculty Council memos, meeting minutes and formal reports from several different tripartite committees, and formal internal and external review reports, and other material artifacts. All archival sources were publically available materials. Secondary sources include four books chronicling the history of St. Lawrence University and the surrounding local community, all of which are discussed further in the beginning of Chapter 4. These archival materials and historical documents give context to the study (Glesne, 2011). I was also able to

establish insight into cultural patterns through the analysis of these historical documents and artifacts, which assisted me greatly in my overall preparation for the interview stage of this case study.

The second step of my research consisted of in-depth one-on-one interviews. The interview participants included fourteen faculty and administrators, as outlined in Table 5. This research method was chosen as it successfully captures personal and human dimensions that cannot be quantified into facts, figures, and dates (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This will allow me to gain a deeper understanding of the University's history through a cultural lens and enable me to fully answer my research questions. Through the use of in-depth narrative interviews, I was able to explore each participant's understanding of – and experience within – St. Lawrence University's culture, as well as understand their individual perspectives on the founding, implementation, and impact of the FYP. Rather than questioning how this LLP may have shaped specific student learning outcomes, the focus of these narrative inquiry interviews sought to yield a thick description of the values, assumptions, and beliefs of the campus community – as well as illuminate their perceptions of how these cultural elements were shaped by the FYP.

3.5. Setting

This is a non-confidential study. The setting of this case study is St. Lawrence University, a small private liberal arts college located in upstate New York. The total undergraduate enrollment in the 2015-2016 academic year was approximately 2,500 students, 99% of whom lived in university-owned, on-campus housing or recognized Greek-affiliated housing. It is a selective institution, with an acceptance rate of 42% for

the Class of 2020. The university has a rich history, with its rural location and small size creating a close-knit institutional culture shaped by close faculty-student connections and a fierce sense of loyalty and passion on the part of students and alumni towards their alma mater. The comprehensive LLP at the focus of this study, the First-Year Program (FYP), was founded in fall 1987 as a pilot program and enrolled approximately one third of the first-year class. One year later, in fall 1988, the FYP was implemented campus-wide and became a requirement for all entering first-year students at St. Lawrence. It continues to be a core component of the University's curriculum to this day. Chapter 4 of this study expands further on this setting, providing a comprehensive overview of St. Lawrence University's history.

This setting was selected for several reasons. First and foremost, St. Lawrence University was one of the first institutions in the country to implement a comprehensive LLP and mandate all first-year students enrolled at the institution participate. Since this study seeks to explore the impact of LLPs on campus culture, this fact makes St. Lawrence an ideal setting. Second, the institution has a proud history that has been well-documented and preserved. Primary source documents, photographs, and artifacts are on file at the university's Special Collections and Vance University Archives in the Owen D. Young Library, as well as the Office of the First-Year Program. The school also has four books written documenting its history, providing me with additional secondary sources beyond primary archival materials from which to develop an extensive historical context. A description of all four books is provided at the beginning of Chapter 4. Another reason this setting was chosen is because St. Lawrence has managed to retain many of the

faculty who played key roles during the foundational years of the FYP; several individuals who have left continue to maintain connections with select members of the campus community, which made it possible to interview them, as well. Given my current employment at the institution, I had immediate access to the site.

3.6. Sample Population

This study conducted in-depth narrative inquiry interviews with fourteen individuals, detailed in Table 5. I utilized a purposeful sampling approach in identifying the interview participants. Interpretivist researchers often select their sample populations purposefully, as purposeful sampling “leads to selecting information-rich cases for study in depth...[and] one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research” (Patton, 2002, p. 46). Most interview participants served as faculty members or administrators, with many of them playing a key role in the development and implementation of the FYP. Four of the interview participants still teach in the program as of the 2016-2017 academic year. I have identified three basic “buckets” of interview participants – faculty who supported the FYP, administrators, and faculty who did not support the program. The one exception is Elaine White, the Assistant to the Vice President of Student Life & Dean of Students. She was interviewed due to her unique insight and perspective on the institution’s history: a native of Canton, she started working in the Dean’s office at St. Lawrence in September 1963, two months prior to the assassination of J.F.K., and still holds the same position today – 53 years later.

Table 5: Interview Participants

Name:	Years of Service to University:	Relevant Position(s):	Taught in FYP:
Faculty – Supporters of FYP			
Joseph Jockel ‘74	1980-Present	Professor of Canadian Studies Co-Founder of East College	Yes*
Baylor Johnson	1972-2014	Associate Professor of Philosophy Co-Founder of BASK East College Faculty, 1984-85 Chair, Committee on Academic Environment FYP Faculty, 1988-89 (1 st full year)	Yes
Joe Kling	1984 -2016	Professor of Government FYP College Chair, 1987-88 (pilot year) FYP College Chair, 1988-89 (1 st full year) Assistant Director of FYP	Yes
Joan Larsen	1977-2010	University Librarian Ad Hoc Committee on FYP Implementation Chair, Recommendation 26 Committee Coordinator of Research, BASK, East, & FYP	Yes
Eve Stoddard	1986-Present	Professor of Global Studies FYP Faculty, 1987-88 (pilot year) FYP College Chair, 1988-89 (1 st full year) Interim Associate Dean of FYP, 1992-93	Yes
Robert Thacker	1983-Present	Professor of English & Canadian Studies BASK Faculty, 1983-84 FYP Faculty, 1987-88 (pilot year) FYP College Chair, 1988-89 (1 st full year) Assoc. Dean of Acad. Advising, 2006-2012	Yes*
Administrators			
Grant Cornwell ‘79	1986-2007	Professor of Philosophy FYP College Chair, 1987-88 (pilot year) FYP College Chair, 1988-89 (1 st full year) 2 nd Associate Dean of FYP, 1992-1997 VP of Academic Affairs, 2003-2007	Yes
Richard Guarasci	1973-1992	Professor of Government Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Greek Life 1 st Director/Assoc. Dean of FYP, 1987-1992	Yes
W. Lawrence Gulick	1981-1987	President	No
Valerie Lehr	1988-Present	Professor of Government & Gender Studies 3 rd Associate Dean of FYP, 1997-2001 VP of Academic Affairs, 2007-2016	Yes*
Ginny Swartz	1971-Present	First-Year Dean of Women Director of the Counseling Center Director of Student Services & Development Student Affairs Liaison to FYP Asst. Director of Community & Student Dev. Director of Student Support	Yes*
Elaine White	1963-Present	Assistant to the VP of Student Affairs	No

Faculty – Opponents of FYP			
Thomas Budd	1972-2009	Professor of Biology Motioned for faculty vote to cancel FYP, 1992	No
Richard Perry	1971-2004	Professor of Anthropology	No

* Denotes faculty still teaching in FYP as of 2016-17 academic year

3.7. Access to Site

As a current full-time employee of St. Lawrence University, I already possess access to the interview site of this case study. All archival materials are publicly available documents on file at St. Lawrence University. I engaged with each interview participant and sought their participation in this study by sending them a formal letter via e-mail, with the assistance of a proxy. I worked in collaboration with the current Associate Dean of the First-Year, Dr. Jennifer Hansen, to distribute the letters. Dr. Hansen sent the letters out on my behalf and, if the invited participant agreed to participate in this study, they were instructed to contact me directly. A sample copy of the invitation letter can be found in Appendix B. Included with the invitation letter was a copy of the Consent to Participate form, which can be found in Appendix C. For participants of this study who lived in close proximity to campus, I offered to meet individually in advance of the interview and answer any questions they may have regarding the study. More importantly, this informal first meeting also served as an opportunity to develop a deeper interpersonal connection with my participants and foster a sense of trust. As explained by Josselson (2013), the “research relationship begins from the first point of interaction and frames the relationship that evolves” (p. 16). Seeking out an opportunity to speak with each interview participant face-to-face can be a healthy and socially engaging start to this relationship. Since I work at the site of this case study

and had preexisting professional relationships with several of the interview participants, it was also important for me to acknowledge this fact and how it may impact the interview process. During my meeting with participants, I sought to reframe the relationship and begin to establish myself in my new role – specifically, “that of a researcher studying a topic in which the participant has life experience expertise” (Josselson, 2013, p. 16). For participants of this study who lived a great distance from campus, I also offered an opportunity to discuss the study in advance over the telephone and conducted each of these interviews via telephone or Skype. Once a participant agreed to participate in the study, we arranged a mutually convenient time to conduct the interview. Each interview lasted between 60-90 minutes.

3.8. Instrumentation

A copy of the interview protocol, along with three separate content analysis protocols, are located in the Appendices. Appendix D is the interview protocol, which was utilized for all interview participants. Appendix F includes three content analysis protocols. The first content analysis protocol tracks data related to research question one and research question two. The second content analysis protocol tracks data related to research question three, and the third content analysis protocol tracks data related to research question 4. An analysis of this data collection is discussed at the beginning of Chapter 5.

3.9. Trustworthiness and Dependability

It is vital for qualitative researchers to employ accepted validation strategies to document the “accuracy” of their studies (Creswell, 2013). However, rather than seeking

to prove quantitative goals of validity, reliability, or objectivity, many qualitative researchers embrace alternative terms such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability – all of which adhere more naturally to the interpretivist research paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility of this study was established through the use of member checks, wherein research participants were provided copies of their transcribed interviews (Merriam, 1998). This allowed all participants to review my data for accuracy of content following their respective interview. Participants were also welcome to add, delete, or provide additional comment on the transcriptions if they chose to do so. This feedback loop was designed to enhance the integrity of the data and strengthen its authenticity. To ensure this study possesses transferability, a “thick description” of the findings are presented, thereby allowing the reader to self-reflect and engage deeply with the research context (Creswell, 2013). To ensure dependability, I developed my interview protocol and practiced what Glesne (2011) labels “pre-pilot testing.” This is essentially a series of practice sessions in which I asked interview questions to collaborators. It is a process that can be thought of as a “three-way interaction among the researcher, the tentatively formed topic, and the interview questions” (Glesne, 2011, p. 109). Pre-pilot testing helped refine my questions, better prepared me as an interviewer, and strengthened the dependability of my findings. I further enhanced the dependability of this study by having the coded data sets checked for consistency in code by multiple colleagues for inter-rater reliability. This process enabled me to establish “stability of responses to multiple coders of data sets” (Creswell, 2013, p. 253).

If one believes concepts are socially constructed, it can be difficult to create criteria ensuring something is “true” or “accurate” (Glesne, 2011). However, I did adhere to a series of methodological steps to ensure this case study demonstrates “trustworthiness” to the reader. Several of these steps – which strive to ensure credibility, transferability, and dependability – have already been discussed. I will also foster trustworthiness through the triangulation of data. This means using multiple data-collection methods, multiple sources, multiple investigators, and/or multiple theoretical perspectives (Glesne, 2011). In this study, I collected data from primary archival sources, secondary literature sources, faculty interviews, and administrator interviews; this use of multiple data-collection methods, as well as multiple interview sources, allowed me to triangulate the findings of this study.

When considering trustworthiness, it is also important for qualitative researchers to acknowledge their own biases, reflect upon their subjectivity, and clearly identify how they will monitor it – as well as use it – in their research (Glesne, 2011). As I have previously established, I am heavily invested in the concept that residential and co-curricular experiences during college can have a positive impact on students. My attachment to this concept could have led me to data supporting my own working hypothesis. I had to be conscious of the risk that I may want to hear and see interpretations that align with this belief, as well as easily find ways of discrediting those that disagree. I addressed my own possible researcher bias by continually exploring my own subjectivity throughout this research process. By writing both before and after my

interviews, I was able to address my pre-conceived options and reflect deeply on my own biases.

3.10. Data Collection Procedures

The unit of analysis for the interview phase of this case study was fourteen individual participants, in addition to the archival materials analyzed in an effort to establish a clear historical context. The data collection methods I employed consisted of archival content analysis, followed by in-depth interviews. For archival content analysis, I reviewed and copied any documents and materials related to relevant aspects of academic, administrative, or student culture at St. Lawrence University. This included tripartite meeting minutes and final reports, memos, letters, newspaper articles, and other miscellaneous primary source materials.

Each participant was interviewed once in a private, one-on-one setting. All participants were reminded prior to the start of their respective interview this was a non-confidential study, and that their name and the name of the case study site (St. Lawrence University) would be used.² However, despite the non-confidential nature of this study all data was treated as confidential and maintained in secure locations. Most interviews were conducted in person on the campus of St. Lawrence University at a mutually agreed upon location. However, there were a few exceptions. Jockel and White each chose to conduct their interviews in their respective offices; Thacker was interviewed at his home. Four candidates who did not reside in close proximity to campus participated in telephone interviews; this included Stoddard, Kling, Guarasci, and Cornwell. Finally,

² As noted in section 3.7 of this chapter, the Consent to Participate form was emailed to all participants in advance and had also informed each individual this was a non-confidential study.

Perry declined to participate in a traditional interview, but did provide a written statement sharing this perspectives on the FYP. Perry's data proved to be insightful and relevant, and was included in the data set.

Participants meet with me individually at the beginning of the interview and signed the Consent to Participate form (Appendix C), with each participant receiving a signed copy. Any remaining questions of clarification regarding the study were also answered at the onset of the interview. The questions contained in the interview protocol focus on being relatively broad, general and open-ended, in an effort to enable participants the ability to better construct the meaning of their experiences (Creswell, 2013). This interview structure approach also situated me in a position of "careful listener" (Creswell, 2013, p. 25), thereby allowing me to properly understand how participants describe specific experiences and perspectives. Each interview was recorded using a laptop with an external microphone, with voice recordings saved to the software program *Audacity*. A hand-held digital recorder was also used to record a back-up audio file of each interview. I recorded split-sheet notes during each interview session; field notes and questions to myself were noted on the right-side, while essential concepts, key quotes, and potential "in vivo" codes were documented on the left-side. Following each interview, I employed a 3rd party to transcribe the interviews into Microsoft Word documents. All correspondence with my first transcriber occurred over secure University of Vermont file transfer/e-mail. A second transcriber was utilized for my final seven interviews, with all file transfers occurring with this individual through *Hightail*, a secure, password-protected file transfer service. Once the completed interview

transcriptions were received, they were stored on my password-protected laptop and located in a secure office space. At the conclusion of this study, the recordings of all sessions will be erased.

3.10. Data Analysis Procedures

At the conclusion of each archival material review and interview I wrote brief memos outlining my personal thoughts and reflections on the data collection experience. Glesne (2011) describes memo writing as a process that, “frees your mind for new thoughts and perspectives...as you work with data, you must remain open to new perspectives, new thoughts” (p. 189). These brief memos served to solidify the direction of my final coding lists, while at the same time illuminating the possibility that common perspectives, themes, and patterns may be present across multiple data sets. In qualitative research, a code is “most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (Saldana, 2013, p. 3). Furthermore, as described by Creswell (2013), coding data enables the researcher to “build detailed descriptions, develop themes or dimensions, and provide an interpretation in light of their own views or views of perspectives of literature” (p. 184). The framework for data analysis in this study, and the coding system implemented to interpret the data, is outlined in Figure 4.

The research design of this study called for archival material analysis to occur prior to interviews being conducted. Utilizing a series of concepts derived from the literature review and conceptual framework of this study, I established a set of “a-priori” codes to analyze these archival materials. Saldana (2013) defines a-priori coding as a

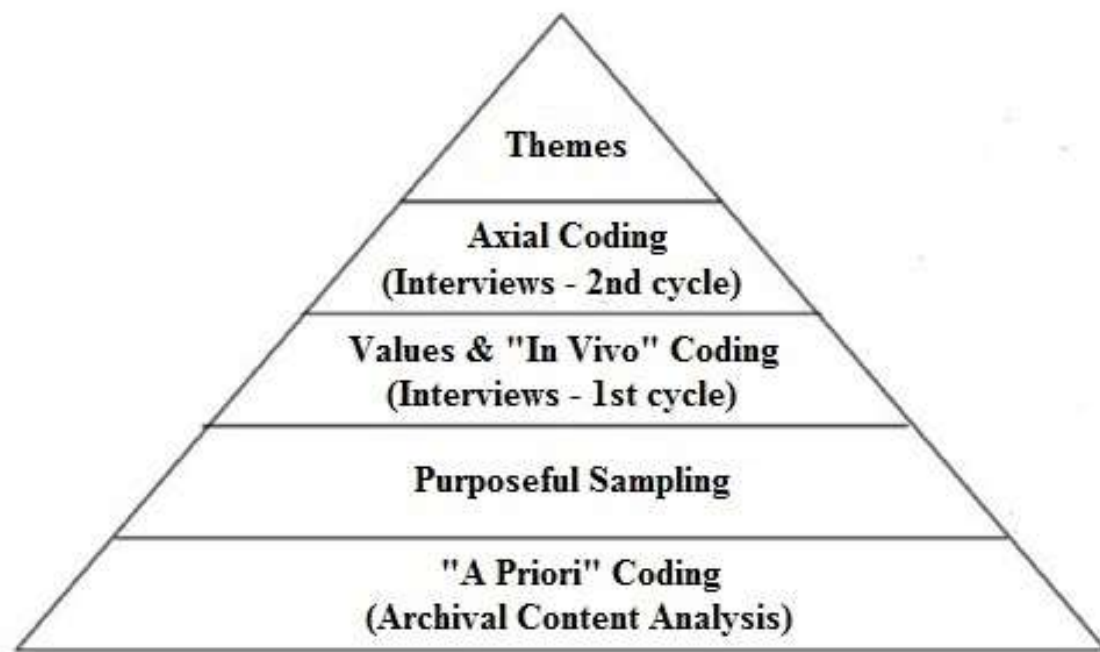


Figure 4: Data Analysis Cycles

“provisional list of codes...determined beforehand to harmonize...[the] study’s conceptual framework or paradigm,” which will assist me in analyzing the archival data and directly answering some of my research questions and goals of this study (p. 62). The list of “a-priori” codes identified for this study are listed in Table 6.

For all data, a low-technology method was applied to organize and code documents and interview transcriptions. Hard copies of archival materials, arranged in chronological order, were printed and placed in three separate three-ring binders. Applying Schein’s (2004) *Conceptual Model for Managed Culture Change*, the first binder of documents chronicled early events during the FYP’s “unfreezing” process. The second binder included documents during the middle of the implementation process,

Table 6: A-Priori Coding

Codes
Student Culture
Faculty Culture
Administrative Culture
Value, Assumption, or Belief
Academic Tone / Academic Skills
Conflict
Relationships
Org. and/or Culture Change
Key People / Moments of Leadership
Beginning of Narrative – “Unfreezing”
End of Narrative – “Refreezing”

when members of the campus community were learning new concepts, meanings, and cultural standards. The third binder consisted of archival documents focusing on the later stages of the program, once it had reached a point of sustainability within the organization, and a cultural “refreezing” was occurring. As explained by Saldana (2013), qualitative researchers often generate large amounts of data, which result in multiple codes requiring a “tightly organized framework” (p. 36). Each code received a corresponding highlighter color, with the data coded line-by-line. Once archival materials were coded and analyzed, these initial “a priori” findings provided me with a deeper understanding of the historical context and proved to be helpful during the interview process.

Once interview transcriptions were available for analysis, I utilized Saldana's (2013) Two Cycle method of coding, as illustrated in Figure 4. During the first cycle of transcription coding, I applied elemental methods ("In Vivo" coding), as well as affective methods (values coding). As each data set was analyzed, notes and particular words of interest used by participants were written on the left margins of the document, while values coding was documented in the right margin. Any reoccurring, participant-generated notes in the left margins are referred to by Strauss (1987) as "In Vivo" codes; possessing a root meaning of "in that which is alive" (p. 33), this form of code refers to the words, short phrases, or "terms used by the [participants] themselves" (p. 33). According to Saldana (2013), "In Vivo" coding is valuable to qualitative studies seeking to "prioritize and honor the participant's voice" (p. 91). I seek to do so with this study and, unsurprisingly, several key phrases emerged as reoccurring axioms among multiple interview participants. Therefore, when reading the transcriptions it was important for me to focus on "words or phrases that seem to call for bolding, underlining, italicizing, highlighting, or vocal emphasis if spoken aloud" (Saldana, 2013, p. 91).

The other type of coding conducted during the first cycle was values coding. According to Saldana (2013), this is the coding of qualitative data reflecting the participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs, thereby representing the individual's perspectives or worldview. Values coding is particularly valuable to qualitative studies seeking to "explore cultural values, identity, intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions in case studies" (Saldana, 2013, p. 111). Since this case study specifically seeks to understand the cultural implications of a comprehensive living-

learning program on institutional culture, values coding proved to be an ideal method of data analysis. Kuh & Whitt's (1988) *Framework for Analyzing Culture in Higher Education* was utilized in mapping out ways to best identify values coding. This resulted in all first cycle coding being organized by (1) institutional factors; (2) subculture factors; or identified as (3) individual actors. Comprehensive coding legends for each research question can be found in Appendix E. Similar to the archival material analysis, I utilized a color-coded highlighter system to code the interview transcriptions, and then organized printed copies of these coded transcriptions in a "master" 3-ring binder.

According to Saldana (2013), if a study is coded by values, attitudes, and beliefs, the next logical step is often to categorize these codes and "reflect on their collective meaning, interaction, and interplay, working under the premise that the three constructs are part of an interconnected system" (p. 112). Therefore, following the first cycle of coding, I categorized and crystalized my analytic work even further with a second cycle of coding. The primary goal of second cycle coding is to "develop a sense of categorical, thematic, conceptual and/or theoretical organization from [my] array of First Cycle codes" (Saldana, 2013, p. 207). To complete this task, I utilized axial coding in the second cycle. As explained by Charmaz (2006), axial coding "relates categories to subcategories [and] specifies the properties and dimensions of a category" (p. 60) – in other words, it analyzes and reorganizes data in a way so that it lets the researcher know "if, when, how, and why" something happens (p. 62). It is possible for a study to have more than one axial code developed during this process (Saldana, 2013). Since this case study explored how a comprehensive LLP was implemented and shaped institutional

culture while also navigating conflict between multiple subcultures, axial coding provides the capacity to fully explore this complex dynamic. Through this evolutionary process, the structure of my data may change.

Once preliminary axial codes were identified, each data set was analyzed line-by-line once again through the lens of this final set of coding. From this step, an initial list of potential themes and conclusions emerged. The data was then reorganized one final time, with all transcription quotes containing common themes being clustered together in a Microsoft Word document. This shift in data display is a necessary step because it is important for “researchers to convert their files to appropriate text units” (Creswell, 2013, p. 182-183). The data analysis process proved to likely be an evolutionary process. Some conceptually-similar codes were merged together, while other coding was dropped due to a lack of reliability. Finally, the interpretation and sense-making of my preliminary axial coding and themes took time and went through several revisions before a final set of concluding themes were established. These themes are discussed throughout Chapter 6.

3.11. Ethical Considerations

When conducting human subject research, all researchers must identify the ethical considerations related to their study. Since this dissertation study did participate in human subject research, it was subjected to the Internal Review Board (IRB) at the University of Vermont before any interviews were conducted. This important step ensured the three basic ethical principles that underlie research – respect, beneficence, and justice – were provided to each of my interview subjects (Research Protections Office, University of Vermont, 2015). Additionally, I placed a priority on being honest

and accurate in all communications with participants. This included clearly conveying to each individual they were participating in a non-confidential study, accurately explaining the purpose of the study, and not engaging any deception about the nature of the study (Creswell, 2013).

3.12. Limitations and Delimitations

A key component to supporting the trustworthiness of qualitative research is to realize the limitations of your study (Glesne, 2011). First, I will highlight several delimitations established within this study. Delimitations are self-imposed characteristics of a study that intentionally limit its scope and define its scholarly boundaries. A key delimiting factor is the choice I made to focus on the implementation of a comprehensive LLP and its cultural implications for the institution, as opposed to specific student learning outputs. Specifically, my findings will seek to better understand the relationship between LLPs and institutional culture, as defined by Kuh & Whitt's *Framework for Analyzing Culture in Higher Education*. When researching the impact of a new academic program, it is possible to focus on any number of potential outcomes. However, I chose to narrow the focus of this case study on a comprehensive LLP and its relationship with – and impact on – one particular university's institutional culture.

Another delimitation is the purposeful sampling of faculty members and administrators directly associated with the development and implementation of the LLP. No students were selected as interview participants. This decision was also influenced by the theoretical frameworks of this study. Kuh & Whitt (1988) describe institutional culture as a process, as well as a product that is always evolving and shaped directly by

the interactions between members of campus community. Additionally, Schein's (2004) three-phase conceptual model for managed organization change indicates the time between "unfreezing" and "refreezing" can be significant; in this case study, this timeline proved to be approximately 19 years, from 1977 to 1996. Once these boundaries were established, it was determined student participants would not be able to fully contribute to the scope of this study.

Several limitations also exist in this case study. Limitations are potential weaknesses to a research study that are out of the control of the researcher. The sample size of this study was fourteen total interview participants. This included a diverse mix of faculty and administrators, including nine men and five women, with many different academic disciplines represented. A total of six participants were faculty who supported the program, six were administrators, and two were faculty who opposed the program.³ I had originally anticipated including more interview participants who were faculty opposed to the program, as well as student affairs administrators. Unfortunately, several individuals who were contacted declined to be interviewed and other key figures are now deceased. Increasing the number of faculty who opposed the program, as well as the number of student affairs administrators, would strengthen this study, if it were to be replicated. Another consideration to strengthen this study would be to seek a more balanced gender mix.

Another limitation is the fact this case study focused on one comprehensive LLP at a small, private liberal arts college in the Northeast. On a basic level, all colleges and

³ Three of the administrators in this study also held tenured faculty positions with the university.

universities share the common threads that define institutional culture, including artifacts, values, and basic assumptions and beliefs (Tierney, 1988; Kuh & Whitt, 1988).

However, variances in such cultural factors can be significant. Therefore, even if this study were to be conducted at multiple sites, each would ultimately offer a distinct blend of academic, administrative, and student sub-cultures, thereby creating natural limitations in how the findings could be applied to other institutions of higher education. This makes the findings of this study transferrable, but not generalizable.

CHAPTER 4: INSTITUTIONAL SETTING

In this chapter I will provide an overview of the history of St. Lawrence University from 1856 to 1977. In many ways, the story of this institution is quite traditional and follows a similar narrative to that of many other colleges in the Northeast established during the antebellum period. I will also incorporate the historical context of national trends in student, faculty, and administrative cultures described in Chapter 2 and contrast these trends to the pivotal events and movements occurring at St. Lawrence. Several books have been written about St. Lawrence University's history and each will be incorporated into the construction of this historical narrative. *Sixty Years of Saint Lawrence*, written by the Class of 1916 and published in 1916, was the first effort to document the University's history. This was followed by *Candle in the Wilderness: A Centennial History of The St. Lawrence University*, written in 1957 and edited by Pink and Delmage. In 1987, the most recent comprehensive history of the institution, *The Scarlet and the Brown: A History of St. Lawrence University 1856-1981*, was published. This book largely focuses on the post-war period and concludes in 1981, which also happens to be the approximate time discussions focusing on the creation of the FYP began to formulate. This third book was written by Blankman and Cannon and edited by Burdick. A fourth book, *St. Lawrence University*, was written in 2005 by Hornung and Van de Water.⁴ It is largely a collection of photographs and historical anecdotes.

⁴ Peter Van De Water, Class of 1958, also served as the Vice President of Student Affairs at St. Lawrence University from 1971 to 1984.

4.1. “A Candle in the Wilderness” Is Founded, 1856

St. Lawrence University was chartered by the New York State Legislature on April 3, 1856. Founded by the Universalist church, it holds the distinction of being the first coeducational institution of higher education in New York State, with degrees granted to “any person of good moral character who has satisfactorily performed the work required by the faculty leading to such a degree” (Blankman, Cannon, & Burdick, 1987, p. 5). According to the Class of 1916 (1916), it was a natural conclusion for the institution to be named St. Lawrence University in honor of the county it is located in and the nearby river, both of which pay tribute to the martyred patron saint. The school’s official motto, *Fides et Veritas*, which stands for Loyalty and Integrity, also embraces the spirit of Saint Lawrence, a “Christian hero whom no fear could induce to betray his trust, who devoted his life to service and never faltered in the performance of his duty” (Class of 1916, 1916, p. 5).

St. Lawrence University was initially conceived by the Universalist ministry solely as a theological school. The prospect of establishing such an institution had been discussed by the Universalist Church as early as 1814 but was met with resistance by some prominent members of the denomination (Class of 1916, 1916). This theological school was originally intended to be in Massachusetts, and in 1840 a resolution was passed to establish the Walnut Hill Evangelical Seminary (Class of 1916, 1916). However, this effort eventually dropped the theological school from its plans and simply became Tufts College, chartered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1852. In that same year, the New York Universalist Education Society was founded with the

specific charge of establishing the much-anticipated theological school. As explained by the Class of 1916 (1916), now that the Universalists had started Tufts College in Massachusetts, “it was the general sentiment that...the proposed theological school should be located in New York” (p. 9).

The annual meeting of the Educational Society was held in Utica, NY on August 29, 1855. A total of twelve communities submitted applications for the theological school. The successful bid was won by the town of Canton in St. Lawrence County. This community is located in the northernmost part of the state, nestled between the St. Lawrence River and the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains. This region of the state consisted predominantly of emigrants from Vermont who had recently settled the area between 1800 and 1825. They were “thrifty, hard-working, theologically liberal and socioeconomically conservative” (Blankman et al., 1987, p. 1) and “carried with them their interest in religion, education and local government” (Corey, 1957, p. 5). Most importantly, they believed, “inherent and fixed, that after the bare necessities of life are adequately provided for the primary need is education” (Class of 1916, 1916, p. 11). By 1855, St. Lawrence County was also known throughout the state as a staunchly Republican region that felt “free soil and free men should prevail over slave territory and involuntary servitude” (Corey, 1957, p. 10), which proved to be an ideal fit with the free-thinking Universalist doctrine.

St. Lawrence University was chartered on April 3, 1856, yet a key detail of the college’s founding remains unclear to this day. The Universalist Church and the Education Society solicited bids only for the founding of a theological school, yet the

incorporating document of the University ultimately provided for the “establishing, maintaining, and conducting *a college* in the town of Canton, St. Lawrence County, for the promotion of general education, and to cultivate and advance literature, science, and the arts; *and* to maintain a theological school at Canton aforesaid” (Class of 1916, 1916, p. 12). And, despite the institution’s religiously-based origins, the bylaws explicitly identified that the college “is and shall remain an unsectarian foundation” (Blankman et al., 1987). How a college was ultimately incorporated into the charter of what should have been simply a theological school is not known; there are no existing records of communication between the Education Society and supporters of the St. Lawrence County site, yet some assert that fund raising was performed – and donations solicited – with the clear understanding by local residents that a theological school as well as a college would be located in Canton (Class of 1916, 1916). This was due to the pressing need for higher education in the region, as the number of graduates from local schools was rapidly increasing (Peters, 1957). There is evidence to suggest this plan may have been a surprise to the leaders of the Universalist ministry. Specifically, Reverend W.S. Balch, who was a member of the Education Society and served as the General Agent for the Committee on Location for the school, first learned of the plan to also incorporate a college when, in June 1856, “he came up to the corner-stone laying [of College Hall] and was handed a placard announcing the laying of the corner-stone of ‘The St. Lawrence University’” (Class of 1919, 1919, p. 11).

The construction of College Hall, the first building on campus, commenced quickly and was completed in August 1857. The theological school opened first and

started classes on April 18, 1858, with one faculty member – Professor Ebenezer Fisher – and four students. The following year, on April 12, 1859, Professor John Stebbins Lee began his duties as the Principal of the Preparatory Department with three students enrolled in his courses. The Preparatory Department was initially structured as a remedial program intended to “create and gradually foster...the classical spirit” (Class of 1916, 1916, p. 40) before students could succeed academically in the theological school, but after two years it would be discontinued and give way to the College of Letters and Science known today as St. Lawrence University.

4.2. The Early Years, 1858 – 1887

Throughout the first forty years of its history St. Lawrence was a very small institution. Although the theological school was fairly prosperous, the college struggled to remain solvent (Blankman, Gaines, Delmage, Pink, & Edwards, 1957). The Civil War began shortly after the school opened, significantly impacting enrollment efforts from the beginning and placing its continued existence in jeopardy; in the following years, the founding of additional theological schools by the Universalist ministry, in Massachusetts and Illinois, further exacerbated this problem (Class of 1916, 1916). In 1869, the school had 25 trustees – and an enrollment of only 46 total students (Blankman et al., 1987). The average freshman class was typically seven or eight in any given year (Class of 1916, 1916). A large percentage of these early students were local men and women from nearby upstate New York farm communities and “to most, if not all, of these students, the attainment of a collegiate education was a matter of great sacrifice and difficulty; and it was appreciated accordingly” (Class of 1916, 1916, p. 47). After almost sixty years, by

1915, a total of only 445 students had been enrolled at St. Lawrence; of these, 360 had attended the theological school and were ordained to enter the work of the Universalist ministry, while 295 were graduates of the college (Class of 1916, 1916).

During these formative years the bonds developing between faculty and students proved to be the bedrock upon which the University would later flourish. In the beginning, College Hall was the only building on campus. This building, known today as Richardson Hall, served multiple functions for both the theological school and the college. Not only did it house classroom space and faculty offices, it was also the hub of campus life and included student dormitories, a dining hall, and recreational space. Theological students had mandatory manual labor duties, while these responsibilities were optional for students enrolled in the college (Delmage, 1957). Similar to most other young campuses during the colonial and antebellum periods, the daily life for students at St. Lawrence was highly structured; morning chapel exercises were held six days per week, wherein roll call was taken, followed by classes throughout the day. The Class of 1916 (1916) describes campus life during the first decade as “uneventful and quiet,” with “a little skating, a little boating, some baseball, and occasionally a sociable; but never a dance, never a class banquet, never a Greek-letter society” (p. 51). As evidenced by an 1880 letter written by one of those students enrolled in the theological school, Reverend M. R. Leonard, this intimate setting allowed for the development of strong connections between faculty and students. In his letter, Leonard (1880) describes the “exceptionally bad” weather, as well as the lack of furnishings and books in College Hall, yet shares

how “Doctor Fisher’s personal influence was about the only bond that held us at Canton during the first year” (from Class of 1916, 1916, p. 18).

Life at St. Lawrence quickly evolved yet continued to closely resemble the traditional college life at other campuses in the northeast. The first student organization was a debate and literary club – the Thelomathesian Society – which stands for *love of knowledge* and *desire to learn*, formed in 1863 (Class of 1916, 1916). This organization would ultimately evolve into the college’s formal student government structure in 1894 through the efforts of future Board Chairman Owen D. Young (Delmage, 1957). The first official campus tradition, Tree Holiday, was established in 1869. Held in the spring term, each student would plant a tree on the barren hill surrounding College Hall. This morning ritual was followed by a game of football or baseball in the afternoon while a formal banquet concluded the evening. The Tree Holiday tradition lives on today in spirit as Moving-Up Day. According to Blankman et al. (1957), while the students “showed purposefulness and appreciated good teaching, they brought to their classes small enthusiasm or zeal for learning” (p. 64). In this sense, the student body at St. Lawrence was similar to the description Horowitz provides when describing campus life throughout America during late 1800’s.

The original student clubs focusing on debate and literature where soon eclipsed by Greek life. The first secret society at St. Lawrence, the Five Lyres, was formed in 1871. This organization was short-lived but one of its members was instrumental in forming the P.D. Society in 1873 (Class of 1916, 1916). The P.D. Society officially became the college’s first Greek organization in 1875 as a chapter of Alpha Sigma Chi;

four years later, in 1879, this organization was absorbed by another national fraternity, Beta Theta Pi. By the turn of the 20th century, St. Lawrence would have four Greek organizations. The first secret society for women, the Browning Society, was formed in 1875 and would ultimately become Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority. The college's second fraternity, Alpha Tau Omega, was established in 1882. Finally, Delta Delta Delta sorority was founded in 1891. The college accommodated these student organizations by enabling fraternities to occupy the dormitories on the third floor of College Hall, while the women were directed to live in private homes in the village (Blankman et al., 1987).

The establishment of Greek life at St. Lawrence would prove to fundamentally shape institutional culture in the coming generations. It is important to note one of the founding members of P.D. Society, Charles Kelsey Gaines '76, was also the son of the President at the time, Absalom Graves Gaines. More importantly, the younger Gaines would soon join the faculty at St. Lawrence, serving his alma mater for 57 years from 1876 to 1932. Looking ahead, Charles Kelsey Gaines' son, Clarence Hurd Gaines '00, would also join the faculty from 1912 to 1947 (Young & Delmage, 1957). At least one member of the Gaines family served on the faculty for 75 uninterrupted years, beginning in 1872 – just 13 years after the College of Letters and Sciences started classes – and continuing until after World War II. As this connection illustrates, the ties between the academy and Greek life grew fast and ran deep. This close relationship is also evident by the description of the P.D. Society in the book *Sixty Years of Saint Lawrence* – both in its tone and message:

It is safe to say that this society comprised a remarkable body of men; and great has been their service to St. Lawrence, both then and later, for little in subsequent

history of the college has been done without their active participation. (Class of 1916, 1916, p. 142)

The elder Gaines served as President for 15 years, from 1872 to 1888, at which point he returned to teaching until his death in 1903. According to Blankman et al. (1957), “his tenure marked the formative years of the college. He did not make it wealthy...[but] efficient, and worthy, to win for it loyal support, to establish its standards, to build up for it a sound tradition” (p. 66).

The faculty at St. Lawrence quickly developed a reputation of being committed and passionate. The theological school and the College of Letters and Sciences were two distinct departments, each with their own President, both of whom reported directly to the University’s Board of Trustees. In the beginning, faculty culture placed a greater emphasis on teaching as opposed to scholarship. In fact, when describing Professor J. S. Lee, an early student of the college explains “[he] was not a great scholar. His education was solid, but his activities were too broad to permit him to perfect himself in particular departments of learning” (from Class of 1916, 1916, p. 49). This focus on teaching was likely borne out of necessity, as the endowment was very small and the college survived with only two faculty members during its first few years of existence. Furthermore, due to these financial constraints, faculty were paid not by the amount of work they performed, yet rather by how much was needed to support their family (Class of 1916, 1916). Despite all of this, students “always found in the professor an associate and leader, toiling in the same workshop and the same work with him” (Class of 1916, 1916, p. 47).

Throughout the 19th century, the University faced serious financial challenges. Records from 1859 show the total assets of University's farm were valued at a meager \$354.50 (Blankman et al., 1987). As early as 1864, an idea was discussed to shutter the doors of the rural New York campus in Canton and relocate the institution to Tufts University in Massachusetts (Class of 1916, 1916). This possibility never materialized, yet financial challenges continued. A key turning point in the institution's history occurred in 1886. The inadequate endowment was taking its toll, resulting in a major financial crisis. It was decided a capital campaign was necessary, but fund-raising needed to start with members of the Canton community if it was to be successful elsewhere in the state of New York. A meeting was held in the village Town Hall on June 3, 1886 where faculty explained the situation and attempted to persuade local community members to donate money. Records show a few prominent members of the community offered to donate, at which point the meeting took an unexpected turn – students started to come forward and give what they could to the campaign. According to the Class of 1916 (1916), “these boys were mostly poor, working their way through college with hardly a dollar to spare...and their subscription totaled more than one thousand dollars” (p. 84). This act inspired the other residents of Canton to act, with practically every person in the room stepping forward and donating, followed by cheer and song (Class of 1916, 1916). The campaign would ultimately go on to exceed the intended goal of \$50,000. It is an achievement credited to the passion and loyalty of the students, since labeled the “Spirit of 1886,” and it saved St. Lawrence University in its most dire moment.

4.3. Campus Change and the “Epoch of Expansion,” 1888 – 1918

Following the financial crisis of 1886, the University entered a period of unprecedented growth. The presidency of Alpheus Baker Hervey ‘61, from 1888 to 1894, is recognized as a successful period in new student recruitment for the college. Most notably, President Hervey successfully enrolled students from other regions of New York and New England (Class of 1916, 1916). This effort would establish pipelines in later years to more populous regions of the Northeast, thereby marking a permanent shift away from local St. Lawrence County natives comprising a majority of the student body. These demographic changes to the student body – and in particular, the emerging connection to New England – also solidified the college’s shift to a very traditional, Greek-focused model of campus life. As the size of the college started to expand, student disciplinary issues started to become a bigger problem. As explained by the Class of 1916 (1916):

Class spirit became a thing to be reckoned with, and some of its manifestations...demanded the serious attention of the administration. Hazing was never carried to any serious length, but interclass conflicts threatened for a time to pass all reasonable limits. (p. 217)

According to Blankman et al. (1987), the autobiography of Professor Gaines identifies 1876 as the year in which this “characteristic St. Lawrence spirit had its birth,” as the Classes of 1876 and 1877 were reportedly the first to “cherish an intense class spirit...[and] each eager above all else to do something to advance the college” (p. 17-18). This trend led to an important development in institutional culture in 1893. The freshman class stormed College Hall as a prank, but President Hervey set the tone for future relations between students and administration by not punishing those responsible

for this act. Instead, he “made his appeal to the good sense, the manhood and womanhood of the students, to their pride in the good name of St. Lawrence and their good will toward self.” (Class of 1916, 1916, p. 217). This alternative response had a profound impact:

Thereafter the method used was prevention...The result was the gradual formation of an *esprit de corps*...a system of student self-government, with cordial cooperation between students and faculty, inaugurated in the early [1890s] without formality and without clamor. (Class of 1916, 1916, p. 217-218)

It is here we begin to see the emergence of a laissez-faire administrative approach to student issues, leading to the “gentleman’s campus” culture later identified by this study and discussed in-depth by the interview participants working at the college in the 1980’s.

The late 1800’s were marked by progressive academic change at St. Lawrence, but also great flux and indecision (Blankman et al., 1957). During President Hervey’s tenure, the college established an endowment for a Women’s Professorship (Class of 1916, 1916). A graduate department offering degrees of Master of Arts was launched in 1886 (Blankman et al., 1957). This was followed by the brief Presidency of John Clarence Lee ’80 from 1896 to 1899, who was also the son of first head of the Preparatory Department, John Stebbins Lee. The younger Lee incorporated several changes, including elective courses, honors seminars, and the dropping of Greek as a graduation requirement; classroom pedagogy also changed, with recitation being replaced by lectures. (Class of 1916, 1916). The shift to a comprehensive elective system, discussed since the end of President Gaines’ term and experimented with under President Hervey, was controversial among the St. Lawrence faculty (Class of 1916, 1916). Originally introduced at Harvard back in 1869, it took an additional 25 years for this concept to

successfully permeate the faculty culture at St. Lawrence. The change was likely facilitated to some extent by one particular professor on staff who had direct ties to Harvard (Blankman et. al, 1957). It was the University's position as a small liberal arts college with limited funds that ultimately led to the adoption of the elective system, as it was recognized that the college would not be able to offer special training like the larger research universities beginning to emerge at this time across the country (Class of 1916, 1916). The Morrill Act of 1862 contributed greatly to the proliferation of these large State universities. Therefore, the small liberal arts college in northern New York needed to confine itself to providing students with the best possible general education of the broadest scope possible –a mission that, it was determined, an elective system could best deliver.

Faculty culture also started to shift from its singular focus on teaching and began to seek a balance with research and scholarship. While the establishment of an elective system with expanded course offerings and increased emphasis on academic departments over general education certainly contributed to this shift, the composition of the faculty was also a factor. At the turn of the century, the college hired three faculty members each of whom had ties to Johns Hopkins, a university based on the scholarship-focused Germanic model of higher education. The Class of 1916 (1916) summarizes this period of change well by stating:

The aim of the older type of college was the development of character. The prevailing tone of its most distinctive elements of instruction was ethical and spiritual; it was the training of the mental and moral faculties which it had primarily in view....In the new epoch the scientific spirit began to prevail in all lines of study, and enthusiasm for knowledge became a foremost characteristic. 'Scholarship' was now the watchword of the universities. (p. 226)

All of these curricular changes were the same type of academic shifts occurring at other institutions of higher education across the country. While St. Lawrence was still a small liberal arts college, its antebellum origins – rooted in conservative, religiously-based colonial values – were beginning to make way for a modern educational paradigm.

Following the two brief presidencies of Hervey and Lee, St. Lawrence appointed Almon Gunnison to the role of President in 1899. This proved to be a watershed moment in the history of the institution, as the Gunnison presidency lasted 15 years and is known today as “The Epoch of Expansion.” Prior to his appointment, the decision was made to merge the administrations of the theological school and the college, making President Gunnison the first modern president to oversee all academic departments of the University (Class of 1916, 1916). Unlike his predecessors, he did not teach; he was focused solely on traveling across the country, growing the endowment, and strengthening the long-term health of the University (Class of 1916, 1916). The results speak for themselves; by the time President Gunnison retired in 1914, the institution looked radically different. In 1903, the Herring Library was expanded with the addition of the Cole Reading Room. The present-day athletic fields were also purchased at this same time. An all-new science building, Carnegie Hall, was constructed in 1906 thanks to the generosity of steel magnate Andrew Carnegie. The relocation of the science departments to this new building allowed for the old College Hall to receive a comprehensive renovation, at which time it was renamed Richardson Hall – the name it still holds to this day.

In addition to expanding the physical footprint of the campus, the academic scope of the institution grew, making it a true “University.” In 1903, the Brooklyn Law School was incorporated as a department of St. Lawrence. This school was located in New York City, but was without a degree-granting charter. St. Lawrence held the necessary charter, due to a brief time in the late 1860’s when it had established a law school, making the incorporation of the Brooklyn Law School a relationship of mutual convenience (Pink & Southworth, 1957). Three years later, in 1906, the New York Legislature established the State School of Agriculture on St. Lawrence’s campus, to be administered by the President and the Board of Trustees of the University (Griffiths, 1957). From 1909 to 1911, three additional academic buildings were built on campus to support the new School of Agriculture. By 1916, just sixty years after it was founded, St. Lawrence University was consisted of a theological school, undergraduate college, graduate school, school of agriculture, and NYC-based law school.

Greek life continued to expand its influence on campus during President Gunnison’s tenure. In 1897, Beta Theta Pi constructed the first fraternity chapter house, located on prime real estate right in the middle of campus; prior to this building, all Greek organizations occupied rented homes in the village (Griffiths, 1957). In 1902, an additional fraternity, Phi Sigma Kappa, received its charter with the active assistance of President Gunnison (Class of 1916, 1916). Shortly thereafter, in 1904, the Pi Beta Phi sorority was established. This was followed in 1905 by the founding of a local fraternity, which would later become Sigma Alpha Epsilon, bringing the total number of Greek organizations up to seven (Griffiths, 1957).

Student life on campus also began to change in fundamental ways, with the uneventful and quiet days of the late 1800's giving way to a more rebellious student culture. One sign of the changing times is the fact morning church exercises, once a daily requirement for all students, were phased out in 1899 due to poor attendance (Class of 1916, 1916). Then the Riot of 1905 occurred; it started when the long-time Dean of the College, Henry Priest, witnessed a student smoking a pipe on the steps of College Hall after a morning chapel service. Since smoking was considered contraband, Dean Priest approached the student, slapped the pipe out of his hand, and informed him he would be suspended (Delmage, 1957). Students were very upset with this stern response and, after a long night of drinking, ventured over the Dean Priest's home on Judson Street in the early morning hours. According to Delmage (1957), they screamed and sang "songs of the most objectionable character" (p. 147) outside the home before returning to campus, where they painted derogatory comments on the front door of College Hall and burned two outhouses on the middle of the football field. Following this act, between 30 and 40 students came forward and were suspended for varying lengths of time (Delmage, 1957). The Class of 1916, who authored *Sixty Years of Saint Lawrence*, is also responsible for a notably nefarious act of its own. On the eve of Tree Holiday they decided to "plant" a stone instead. In the late night hours, they chiseled out one of the foundation blocks of Richardson Hall and replaced it with a block of granite engraved with "1916;" following this act, legend has it the boys broke out the liquor and admired their work (Blankman et al., 1987). In response, and perhaps learning from the Riot of 1905, the administration returned to their conciliatory ways and offered the Class of 1916 the opportunity to fix

the stone before the threat of suspension was put forth. The students complied, quickly mortaring the original stone back in place. An interesting endnote to this story is that one of the students involved was a local Canton native who lived one block from campus and the granite slab was allegedly placed in his basement; after 40 years, at the Reunion of 1956, the Class of 1916 reconvened, brought the granite back to campus, “planted” it on the grounds, and then broke out the liquor one more time (Blankman et al., 1957). In addition to these acts of defiance, the annual Tree Holiday tradition had devolved to the point where it “centered almost exclusively in Freshman-Sophomore rivalry...and disorders attendant upon the day itself became more and more objectionable” (Class of 1916, 1916, p. 113). According to Delmage (1957), these Freshman-Sophomore battles came to be known on campus as “rushes.” They ultimately led to Tree Holiday being abolished in 1910. That same year, it was decided that a separate Board of Trustees would be established for the theological school, thereby officially making the college a non-secular institution – as it had been in practice from the earliest days, and clearly continued to be in 1910 (Class of 1916, 1916).

Despite several rebellious student incidents, many positive developments occurred on campus during this time. The first issue of the student newspaper, *The Hill News*, was published on May 22, 1911 and soon became a popular outlet for student voice. However, as noted by the Class of 1916 (1916), the publication has always “been unswervingly loyal to the highest interest of St. Lawrence” (p. 179). The roots of political activism also began to form in the 1910’s, with the Good Government Club and the Women’s Forum both becoming active on campus (Class of 1916, 1916). For a

period of time the women on campus developed their own government, the Women's Student Government Association (Blankman et al., 1987). Furthermore, an Honor Code was adopted in 1913. Perhaps most interestingly, as Greek life continued to become a more prominent force in campus life, a group of students that Horowitz (1987) would categorize as "outsiders" began to emerge. In 1915, non-Greek women began meeting on a bi-weekly basis and formed the Al Ki group, while non-Greek men formed the Commons Club; both groups serve as precursors to the "God Damn Independents" (GDIs) of the 1980's and it is here that we begin to see the earliest signs of alienation among independent students due to the emerging dominance of Greek life.

Athletics started to flourish during this period in history and became a more prominent aspect of student life. The college's first gymnasium was constructed in 1897, followed shortly thereafter by the purchase of the several acres of land for athletic fields in 1906 (Blankman et al., 1987). Hockey became very popular in the 1920's, with the first ice rink built outdoors directly behind the Dean Eaton women's residence. When discussing the history of athletics at St. Lawrence, it is important to mention one particular student-athlete alumnus, Isadore Demsky '39. Mr. Demsky is better known today as Hollywood actor Kirk Douglas and was an accomplished championship wrestler during his time at St. Lawrence – an aspect of institutional history that proved to have significant cultural implications 55 years later, as discussed in Chapter 5.

To financially support the profound physical growth of the campus during the early years of President Gunnison's tenure, the decision was made to launch the largest capital campaign yet in the history of the school. The effort started in the summer of

1910 with the goal of raising \$150,000; if this amount was reached within one year, the Rockefeller Foundation agreed to a matching grant of an additional \$50,000. As the deadline neared, it seemed as if the University would fail to achieve its goal. However, it was at this critical juncture that the “Spirit of 1886” reasserted itself, as the students took it upon themselves to march throughout the streets of Canton and solicit additional donations (Class of 1916, 1916). News of this effort reached President Gunnison, who was in New York City at the time. According to the Class of 1916 (1916), a “greatly heartened” President “exerted himself to the utmost and...[one day prior to the Rockefeller deadline] was able to announce that his great task was triumphantly completed” (p. 279). Once again, the students of St. Lawrence demonstrated their passion and loyalty and helped save their school.

President Gunnison retired on November 1, 1914 and the “Epoch of Expansion” came to a close. When his retirement was announced, a testimonial was distributed which read:

During his stewardship the endowment has grown from \$210,000 to \$562,000; the student body has quadrupled;...the receipts from tuition have [more than tripled]; the buildings have grown from four to fourteen;...the faculty has been enlarged and its compensation made adequate; old friends have been retained and hosts of new ones acquired. (Class of 1916, 1916, p. 283)

An unshakable foundation, initially fostered during the difficult years of the late 1800’s, had finally been realized. The campus had expanded, teaching facilities were modern, and finances were adequate. As described by Griffiths (1957), this time had “marked a turning point from a small struggling institution kept alive by the self-sacrificing devotion of a small group of strong and able men into an institution capable of competing with

other colleges” (p. 90). The University would face some lean times in the coming years, as student enrollment would drop by forty percent during World War I (Griffiths, 1957). However, the biggest transformation the college has ever seen was soon to come – and it would be led by two alumni from the early days who grew up as poor farm boys in northern New York.

4.4. Transformation into a Residential College, 1919 – 1939

On May 1, 1919, Richard Eddy Sykes '83 became President of St. Lawrence University. This proved to be a transformational decision for the institution. For Sykes, the opportunity to be President represented a full-circle journey; not only was he an alumnus of the college, but Sykes had also grown up on a farm just outside of Canton and took his first job – at the age of nine – tending to the woodstoves inside College Hall (St. Lawrence University, n.d.). During Sykes' tenure, which lasted 16 years, the size of the student body more than doubled, from 295 in 1919 to 663 by 1927 (Young & Delmage, 1957). He would also oversee a comprehensive capital campaign and significantly grow the size and scope of the University. When he first assumed office, the college property was valued at approximately \$500,000. Upon his retirement in 1935, the assets of the University were worth over \$2.5 million (Young & Delmage, 1957).

President Sykes would not complete this work alone, as he was fortunate to have a close ally and collaborative partner in Owen D. Young '94 (Young & Delmage, 1957). A long-time member to the Board of Trustees, Young would serve as Chairman of the Board for much of Sykes' presidency. Owen D. Young was a visionary leader; not only was he the former president of General Electric and founder of Radio Corporation of

America (RCA), but he also co-authored the Dawes Plan following World War I. When that initial proposal faltered, world leaders supplanted it with the Young Plan in 1929, and Owen D. Young was named Time magazine's "Man of the Year."

The mission of President Sykes was clear: continue to overhaul and expand the campus facilities, grow the endowment, and provide the wider educational experience demanded by new, post-war global conditions (Young & Delmage, 1957). This led to the most ambitious fundraising effort in the school's history, the "Million Dollar Campaign." The program was launched in 1922 with a "Million-Dollar Fund Drive" through Main Street in the village of Canton. It was carried to a successful conclusion, demonstrating the growing strength of the St. Lawrence alumni and friend network. Also contributing to the fiscal health of the University was the aforementioned Brooklyn Law School, operating under St. Lawrence's law school charter. The NYC-based school flourished during this era, becoming the largest law school in the country by 1928 with 3,312 students enrolled (Pink & Southworth, 1957). The law school helped bolster St. Lawrence connections in the New York City region, boosted the school's reputation, and helped transform the institution – albeit for a brief period of time – into a full-fledged University.

With the "Million Dollar Campaign" thriving, attention turned to campus expansion. It had been 20 years since the last new building on campus, Carnegie Hall, had been constructed in 1906. In 1926, construction was completed on several new buildings: Gunnison Chapel, Brewer Gymnasium, and Hepburn Science Hall. According to Hornung & Van de Water (2005), legend has it the original gymnasium may have been

burned down by the students in hopes a better facility would take its place. Each of these new structures, along with the two residence halls to be built shortly thereafter, proved to be impressive, well-constructed buildings; most were made of stone and featured classic architectural design that would fit in on any Ivy League campus. In addition to Richardson Hall, Herring-Cole Library, and Carnegie Hall, these 1920's structures comprise the majority of the University's present-day "historic district." Owen D. Young also used his considerable wealth to accumulate most of the acreage surrounding the east and south edges of campus, which he then donated back to the University. A University-owned golf course was built on the land to the east and incorporated a grand, half-mile long "Avenue of the Elms" – a landscape feature that would become, and continues to be to this day, one of the campus's most beautiful and defining characteristics.

The most significant construction efforts during this period, in relation to institutional culture, proved to be residential. From the earliest days of the college, the only student dormitories previously offered on-campus had been the third floor of Richardson Hall. This changed in 1927, when Dean Eaton "Women's Residence" was completed. Four years later, in 1931, the "Men's Residence," later named Sykes Hall, opened. These two buildings were the first at St. Lawrence to be built exclusively for student residential needs; prior to their construction, most students lived in rented apartments and boarding rooms in the village. The presence of such buildings would have a profound impact on the student experience. The college was now a residential campus, with students of all class years having more frequent opportunities to engage with one another. Both residences were located in close proximity to the preexisting

academic buildings, thereby reinforcing the sense that St. Lawrence was a small, close-knit community. The Men's Residence, in particular, was an innovative design featuring a series of residential "houses," a large center courtyard, study lounges on each floor, a large formal lounge, and dining facilities. Upperclass students who were Greek continued to live in their chapter houses, but Sykes and Dean Eaton residences provided an opportunity for all first-year students to have a shared living experience.

Greek life continued to have a strong influence on campus, as the deep ties between the institution and Greek organizations became increasingly evident. Many prominent leaders of the institution – including faculty and board members – were now alumni who had been directly involved in the early days of Greek life on campus. President Sykes was a member of Beta Theta Pi and was well-known for using the phrase "the greater fraternity of St. Lawrence" when describing the campus community (Young & Delmage, 1957). The long-time Dean of the College, Edwin Lee Hulett '03, was a member of Alpha Tau Omega. Like President Sykes, Dean Hulett had also grown up in a nearby village in St. Lawrence County. He served as the Dean of the College under five different presidents, from 1915 to 1941, and is described by Young & Delmage (1957) as "the man who, to all appearances, ran St. Lawrence University" (p. 117). Another influential Alpha Tau Omega brother was Millard Jencks '05, who stepped into the role of Chairman to the Board of Trustees after Owen D. Young and served as the University's wartime President from 1940 to 1944 (Delmage, 1957). Under these favorable conditions, the number of Greek organizations continued to expand. Between 1921 and 1930, two additional sororities, Kappa Delta and Alpha Delta Pi, along with the

Sigma Pi fraternity, all joined the ranks at St. Lawrence, increasing the total number of Greek organizations to ten. Kappa Delta originated from an independent women's group known as Panpasia, while Sigma Pi was a Greek colonization of Commons Club, the independent men's group.

Most Greek organizations had houses by this time, either built on campus or located nearby in the village. Since a large percentage of students were affiliated with a Greek organization, chapter houses addressed a critical housing need that the University was unable to fulfill prior to the construction of the Sykes and Dean Eaton residences. More importantly, prior to the 1920's, chapter houses also served as the social hubs of student life for both Greek and independent students. This was a role that St. Lawrence, by all appearances, was more than willing to let the Greek system accommodate.

According to Griffiths (1957), the University "owes much to the improvisation by its own undergraduates of this fraternity system, for without it campus life would have lost much of its zest and human interest" (p. 199). For example, the Beta Ball and Alpha Ball quickly evolved into the two most prominent social events on campus each year (Delmage, 1957). As explained by Delmage (1957):

Through fraternity houses, St. Lawrence University was supplying to the majority of its undergraduates the facilities of clubhouse living, and a congenial and hospitable home away from home. A spirit of intimate fellowship pervaded the campus; the college itself, to a degree possible only in a small institution, was one large and inclusive family. (p. 144)

A *Hill News* article published in April 1937 supports this assessment and provides insight into how strongly the perceived attraction of Greek life had become at the college. The article discussed recent changes at Colgate College that "deferred" pledging to after

spring break, thereby effectively making active Greek membership a Sophomore-Junior-Senior experience. The author of this article explains:

The one admitted disadvantage of the plan is that it will tend to encourage rushing for a whole year...a system of deferred rushing at St. Lawrence has been advocated, from time to time, by those who do not thoroughly understand our fraternity system...Anyone adopting that attitude immediately displays his [sic] lack of understanding of our fraternity system. Fraternities are part of St. Lawrence. They contribute a major share of the St. Lawrence spirit. (Deferred rushing, 1937)

While many college campuses witnessed the first incidents of student activism in the early decades of the 20th century, student culture at St. Lawrence was focused primarily on the traditional campus life experience. According to Delmage (1957), during the Prohibition era in the 1920's, "flaming youth burned brightly...an era of wonderful nonsense brought a mood of carefree fun to the decade between the First World War and the Great Depression" (p. 153). During the 1930's the mood was a bit more somber, but ultimately students still relished the traditional college experience, Greek life continued to dominate the college life scene, and "the spirit of carefree fun continued" (Delmage, 1957, p. 153). This commitment to carefree fun is best illustrated by the infamous Protest of 1931. Students were upset over policies governing house parties and dating on fraternity porches and threatening to strike and picket Richardson Hall (Delmage, 1957). This incident caught the attention of President Calvin Coolidge and well-known entertainer and newspaper columnist Will Rogers, but according to Delmage (1957), "the students were really rebelling against what they called the excessive 'paternalistic and maternalistic feeling on the part of the administration' toward them" (P. 154). The "Salt Rush" and "Cane Rush" rivalries between freshmen and

sophomore men, once associated with the now-defunct Tree Holiday, continued until the 1930's. These events were quite violent, as "bags of salt were thrown at the opposition and students whacked each other with canes...a large medicine ball was placed at the center of Weeks football field and each class tried to roll it over the other's goal line, no holds barred" (Hornung & Van de Water, 2005, p. 49). As explained by St. Lawrence's monthly publication, *The Laurentian*, rushes served an important purpose for incoming new students because, "He [a Freshman] realizes for the first time what he is and where he is. The battle is a test of his strength and tact and sand, and whether the result is victory or defeat it has never failed to bring the class into closer union" (Skinner, 1903, p. 196). Another notable moment of this era is the graduation of Jeffrey Campbell '33, who was the first African-American to attend St. Lawrence University. Unfortunately, only two additional students of color would accomplish this same feat over the course of the next 35 years, until intentional efforts to diversify the student body were launched in the 1960's.

Despite protest efforts by students, the practice of *in loco parentis* was in full force throughout 1920's and 1930's. Following the construction of Dean Eaton Women's Residence, Jane Louise Jones would join the college and serve as the Dean of Women for 14 years, from 1929 to 1943. Working in conjunction with her counterpart Edwin Hulett, who served as the Dean of the College, campus life was well-supported as both took a personal interest in each student and "interviewed every coed even before [they] came to college" (Delmage, 1957, p. 134).

In his autobiography, *The Ragman's Son*, Kirk Douglas '39 dedicates an entire chapter to his experience as a student at St. Lawrence. Providing a vivid illustration of St. Lawrence during this period in history, this book also highlights the dominance of Greek life as well as the painful hurdles he faced as a Jewish man on campus in the 1930's. Upon his arrival to St. Lawrence in fall 1935, Douglas (1988) marveled:

I wanted to belong. Around the campus were the fraternity and sorority houses, very imposing buildings, each with a distinct personality. Tri Delta was the rich, pretty girls. Another house was the good students. Alpha Tau Omega was the jock house. They all had secret meetings and handshakes, and special social events, dances and parties, to which they invited one another. They were a group, a family. They belonged. (p. 58)

Like most new first-year students at St. Lawrence, Douglas expressed an interest in Greek life. Once rushing started, he was invited to dinner at the ATO house. He was scheduled to have a fraternity brother pick him up at six o'clock and escort him to the dinner, but unfortunately:

I sat and waited for a long time. It got very quiet. Nobody was on the floor. Nobody came. And nobody called. I could hear the students starting to come back from dinner downstairs, and still no one came....I later learned that they had thought I was Polish. When they found out I was Jewish, they just dropped me....That rejection hurt. I had assumed that a university was above anti-Semitism. Not at all, I learned painfully. (Douglas, 1988, p. 58-59)

In his junior year, Kirk Douglas ran for Thelmo president and won. For the first time in the school's history, an unaffiliated non-Greek student was elected as president of the student body. As Douglas (1988) explains, "the alumni were furious, threatening to withhold contributions. 'What's happening at SLU? A Jew boy president of the study body!'" (p. 71)

In addition to the challenges Kirk Douglas faced, there is evidence to suggest not all was well with other aspects of the institution, despite progress with campus expansion efforts and the impressive growth of the endowment. Questions about the quality of the educational experience existed, as illustrated by Owen D. Young's Commencement address of 1931, where he stated:

I commend to you an examination of what your obligations are in this modern world and a continuing study of how you intend to perform them...No diplomas should be granted until men and women know something more about the area of their obligations in life and something more about their duty in their performance. (from Guarasci et al., 1994, p. 4)

Young (1931) then outlined to the graduates five critical questions:

First. Have you enlarged your knowledge of obligations and increased your capacity to perform them?

Second. Have you developed your intuitions and made more sensitive your emotions?

Third. Have you discovered your mental aptitude?

Forth. Have you learned enough about the machinery of society and its history to enable you to apply your gifts effectively?

Fifth. Have you acquired adequate skill in communication with others? (from Blankman et al., 1987, p. 22-23)

The concerns expressed by Young here are reinforced by a letter penned by future

President Jencks to Young. In his correspondence, Jencks (1933) stated:

During the next five or ten years a searching scrutiny is going to be made of all college courses, and I think there will come a different and, I believe, a higher standard of educational values....The opportunities as outlined by you for further development in the academic field constitute a challenge to us. (from Delmage, 1957, p. 132)

Following Sykes' retirement, the presidency of Laurens Hickock Seelye was brief, only lasting from 1935 to 1940. However, it is notable for his progressive academic insight. One could argue the efforts by Seelye were aimed at addressing the very

questions Young and Jencks posed to one another just a few years earlier. Specifically, Seelye introduced the Freshman-Sophomore Civilization Discussion Groups. It proved to be a precursor to the First-Year Program (FYP), as it was an innovative freshman seminar intentionally focusing on an interdisciplinary approach to teaching world issues and communication skills (Blankman et al., 1987). While this program did not last, many of Seelye's forward-thinking efforts would later be realized in a post-war St. Lawrence, including an expansion of the study abroad programs and, ultimately, the establishment of the FYP almost 50 years later.

4.5. World War II and the Post-War Boom, 1940 – 1969

Even before the United States' entry into World War II, the University became involved in the anticipated war effort. In 1941, a flight unit of the Civilian Pilot Training Program was established utilizing the nearby airfield in Ogdensburg (Delmage, 1957). Following the outbreak of the war, St. Lawrence offered training programs for both Army and Navy, along with V-5 Navy pilot training and V-12 Navy officer training units. St. Lawrence would ultimately be responsible for training 150 Navy pilots and preparing approximately 1,500 Navy officers; in addition to this, more than 500 students enrolled in the traditional college would go on to serve for the Allied Forces (Delmage, 1957). On the Homefront, the long-standing University Registrar, Helen "Tommie" Whalen, sent a monthly "Tommie's Newsletter" to all students in service, while student staffers on the *Hill News* organized a "Letters to Larries" effort (Delmage, 1957). The war provided the women on campus with an opportunity to take on new roles that had traditionally been

dominated by men, such as serving as editors of campus publications and taking on leadership positions in Thelmo (Delmage et al., 1987).

President Eugene Bewkes was inaugurated on June 23, 1945. He would become the University's longest-serving President to date, providing 18 years of service and retiring in 1963. Under his leadership, St. Lawrence entered another golden age, launching the most comprehensive campus expansion program the institution has ever seen. His successor, President Foster S. Brown '30, had close ties to the school prior to his presidency and continued to execute Bewkes' master plan from 1963 to 1969; the campus as it appears today is largely due to these expansion efforts.

Following the war, student enrollment exploded. Due to the G.I. Bill, many of these new students were veterans. In 1945, the student body at St. Lawrence consisted of 350 women and only 80 men; three years later, enrollment had swelled to more than 1,400 students, with 680 of them veterans (Blankman et al., 1987). Enrollment would continue to grow steadily before reaching just over 2,000 students by 1969 (Blankman et al., 1987). This growth required additional residential housing, which would come in the form of both temporary and permanent structures. The school hastily constructed "Vetsville" and "Faculty Court," a series of shoddy housing units on the edge of campus providing housing for veterans and their families, as well as younger instructors (Blankman et al., 1987). Renovations were also performed in Sykes and Dean Eaton residences to expand bed count. Many of the veterans chose to play intercollegiate athletics and the school experienced a Golden Age of athletics, with the hockey team and skiing team rising to national prominence (Blankman et al., 1987). Bobby Thompson,

who hit “the shot heard round the world” that put the New York Giants over the Brooklyn Dodgers and into the 1951 World Series, was a former St. Lawrence student (Hornung & Van de Water, 2005). This era would firmly solidify athletics as a core aspect of St. Lawrence’s institutional identity.

Once again, it was determined a capital campaign was necessary to support the massive influx of students. The St. Lawrence network had matured and, by 1963, over 70 percent of all alumni participated in the Alumni Fund; further heightening the spirit of giving was the fast-approaching centennial celebration in 1956 (Blankman et al., 1987). This healthy financial outlook resulted in over 15 years of uninterrupted campus expansion. The first phase of this effort was construction of the Appleton Arena hockey facility in 1950 to support the nationally-competitive men’s hockey program. Two new men’s dormitories were then constructed near the golf course in 1954, which would become Hulett and Jencks residences. The crowning of achievement President Bewkes’ initial master plan was next – an all-new library to replace the antiquated Herring-Cole, completed in 1959. A second phase of capital projects launched that same year, focusing largely on student life needs. Another residence hall for women, Whitman Hall, was constructed in 1959. Three years later, in 1962, the Edward J. Noble University Center – situated on the edge of the University quad – was opened. President Brown furthered campus expansion with Rebert residence hall in 1964, Vilas administration building in 1965, the Griffiths Arts Center in 1967, Bewkes Science Center in 1968, Lee residence hall in 1969, and the Augsburg Physical Education Center in 1970. Unlike the centrally-located Sykes and Dean Eaton residences built before the war, all residence halls

constructed in the 1950's and 1960's were located on the east side of campus, away from the academic buildings. This created a clear physical separation between the academic "core" of the University and the residential facilities now located in "suburbs" along the edge of campus. In the coming years, this physical campus layout would contribute to an increasing divide between academic and residential life at St. Lawrence.

While enrollment at the undergraduate college expanded, over the next 25 years the institution would experience a contraction in the scope of its university status. First, the Brooklyn Law School was granted separation from St. Lawrence in 1943. The urban law school suffered from extreme declines in student enrollment during the World War II, dropping in enrollment from more than 3,300 in 1928 down to only 200 students by the early 1940's (Blankman et al., 1987). Following discussions of a possible closure, St. Lawrence instead relinquished its law school charter to an independent Brooklyn board (Pink & Southworth, 1957).

Following the departure of the Brooklyn Law School, the State School of Agriculture on St. Lawrence's campus became a unit of the New York State University (SUNY) system in 1949. Its name also changed to SUNY Agricultural and Technical Institute (ATI). Administrative control, originally placed under the guidance of St. Lawrence, now rested solely with the President of the Agriculture school and its governing state regulators (Pink & Southworth, 1957). Shortly thereafter, plans were established to relocate ATI to its own campus on the other side of the village of Canton. The groundbreaking ceremony for the new ATI campus was held in 1962, with classes commencing at the new location in 1968; this state institution is still in operation and

known today as SUNY Canton. Following the complete departure of ATI from its original location, St. Lawrence University absorbed and renovated the remaining buildings and land, further expanding the size of its own residential campus – and essentially occupying the entire southeast quadrant of the village of Canton.

Finally, the theological school – the academic department that led to the original founding of St. Lawrence University – was closed in 1965. Following a merger of the Universalist Church with the Unitarian Church in 1961, it was determined that a consolidation of theological schools was necessary (Blankman et al., 1987). It was the newly-formed Unitarian-Universalist Association's preference that all ministers be trained in urban, graduate environments, thereby placing the St. Lawrence's rural, predominantly undergraduate site in grave jeopardy (Blankman et al., 1987). While efforts were made to relocate the department within another university, the Board of Trustees were ultimately forced to make the difficult decision to forever close the theological school. By 1966, all that remained at St. Lawrence University was the undergraduate college and a small graduate school; it would be within this smaller, insular environment that Greek life would continue to dominate and cultural tensions would soon emerge, ultimately leading to the creation of the FYP twenty years later.

Throughout this time the professionalization of faculty continued. A greater percentage sought to obtain terminal degrees, while emphasis was placed on strengthening the tenure, promotion, and sabbatical leave policies (Blankman et al., 1987). The Middle States evaluation of 1968 cited the need for a new system of shared governance for the institution; this recommendation, in addition to the collaborative work

on professionalization policies, ultimately led to the formation of a formal Faculty Council in 1969 (Blankman et al., 1987). At this time department heads were replaced by faculty-elected department chairs. As Philosophy Professor Baylor Johnson recalls:

A department head was an administrative appointment who served at the pleasure of the President and ran the department according to the rules determined by the administration....So, it was explained to me [when I arrived in 1972], that we don't have department heads; we have department chairs. (personal communication, September 9, 2016)

According to Blankman et al. (1987), despite mounting societal tensions in the mid-1960's, the relations between faculty and administrators and trustees grew more cordial.

According to the authors of *Candle in the Wilderness*, the post-war enrollment growth also caused the administration to perceive there was pressure for additional fraternity life (Griffiths, 1957). The administration worked closely with Interfraternity Council to recruit a chapter of Sigma Chi to campus and then proceeded to purchase a private residence on the edge of campus to house the new fraternity (Griffiths, 1957). The total number of Greek organizations was now at eleven. The strength of St. Lawrence's Greek system was evident when, in 1960, alumnus Dr. Seth R. Brooks '22 was elected as national president of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity (Blankman et al., 1987). President Bewkes was generally supportive of Greek life and, following a 1959 report by a trustee-faculty committee, it was determined the University would "continue the Greek system, relying upon it for housing, support of traditions, and reinforcement of campus cohesiveness...[but] the desire that fraternities might boost campus morale was, of course, not always fulfilled" (Blankman et al., 1987, p. 54).

With wartime struggles becoming a fading memory, interest in Greek life intensified again. The departures of the theological school and ATI helped create a more homogenous student culture, also contributed to this dynamic. The period between 1959 and 1969 would prove to be the height of Greek life at St. Lawrence, with seven fraternities and six sororities, for a total of 13 active organizations on campus. Over 60% of the total student population was affiliated with a fraternity or sorority, with approximately 85% of campus-elected offices being held by Greeks (Schodde, 1965). Not surprisingly, the institution would yield its strongest alumni support in the 1980's from Greek-affiliated graduates of this era (Marden et al., 1987). According to Blankman et al. (1987), "fraternity and sorority parties became less and less restrained, a fact which contributed to growing debate over the pros and cons of the Greek system" (p. 101). A number of factors contributed to this; the chapters were loosening their ties with the national offices, while at the same time the close relationships they once had with their alumni began to weaken. In the summer of 1965, an external review of the fraternity system was conducted and presented to the Board of Trustees; the focus of the report was to analyze the housing needs of the system. According to the consultant:

[Fraternities] provide almost the only group social life available...St. Lawrence groups at least do not suffer from an excess of snobbish exclusionism which harms fraternity-independent relationships on many other campuses. Still, some independents believe that to "rate" at St. Lawrence it seems necessary to belong to a fraternity. (Schodde, 1965, p. 2-3)

This 1965 report, titled *A Report to the Trustees of St. Lawrence University Concerning Certain Fraternity Questions*, stands out for its prominent support of the Greek system. Schodde (1965) identifies several fraternity houses in need of facilities upgrades, while

also noting how the newly-constructed Edward J. Noble Student Center and new residence halls present “formidable competition...unless immediate steps are taken to renovate existing [Greek] structures” (p. 8). The recommendation was made for the University to construct several new fraternity houses to ensure the Greek system remains competitive with the traditional residence hall offerings (Schodde, 1965). Following the 1965 report, the University did choose to dedicate the necessary resources and three additional residential buildings were quickly built by 1967 specifically for Greeks; two were occupied by fraternities, while the other was named East Hall and used for independent student housing due to a lack of demand from the Greek system. Exactly 20 years later, these three buildings would be used for a very different purpose – providing an intimate living-learning environment for the pilot program of the FYP.

While the post-war period is generally remembered for its academically-focused “silent generation” of veterans, this does not accurately describe St. Lawrence. Despite having a high number of veterans enrolled, a few rebellious behaviors reminiscent of the 1930’s quickly reemerged following the war. Once again, students pushed back against the administration in instances in which they felt control of their collegiate experience was being wrestled away from them; at St. Lawrence, this always coincided with policies involving alcohol and visitation rights. The first post-war conflict occurred in the spring of 1947 when the administration, with full support from trustees and faculty, denied the demand of some students for second-floor privileges at fraternity house parties (Delmage, 1957). In the spring of 1956, the University, again with unanimous backing from trustees and faculty, refused to relax the policy against consuming mixed drinks on university

property; according to Delmage (1957), Dr. Bewkes reminded the students that education was their real reason for attending college and it would be in everyone's collective best interest to put a decisive end to the whole affair. However, anonymous letters from students to the *Hill News* (Letters to the Editor, 1956) criticized the actions of administration, claiming "students now have little to no responsibility in governing their actions" (p. 2). Not surprisingly, at this same time fraternities were also beginning to reject any connection with the University they perceived as *in loco parentis*, including the presence of housemothers within the chapter houses (Blankman et al., 1987).

Coincidentally, at the conclusion of chapter focusing on Greek life in *Candle in the Wilderness*, Griffiths (1957) noted the problems with fraternities and sororities have "become somewhat different and more serious" (p. 205) and the connection between current members and alumni was beginning to weaken. Considering all of these factors, it should come as no surprise that when Foster Brown entered the presidency in fall of 1963, his son – a recent 1963 graduate – warned him there was an "anti-administration" feeling among students (Blankman et al., 1987, p. 66).

By the mid-1960's, the "silent generation" of World War II veterans had graduated. According to Blankman et al. (1987), in 1964 a taped session with students, faculty, and administrators repeatedly brought up the words "apathy," "aloof," and "play it cool" when describing the student body. One indicator of this laid-back atmosphere was the Orientation program – a four-day affair wherein new students could "cushion the transition to college life...[and] begin the year in a somewhat relaxed fashion"

(Blankman et al., 1987, p. 78). Elaine White, who has served in the Dean of Students office since September 1963, described the approach to student affairs in the late 1960's:

We didn't...check on students all the time. There were not a whole lot of incidents that came up. We didn't have these alcohol poisonings, or these "up in the middle of the night doing crazy stuff" [types of incidents]....or if we did, we weren't hearing about it. (personal communication, September 29, 2016)

Another major change in student culture was the intentional effort by President Brown to strengthen the diversity of the student body. This resulted in a total of ten African-American students entering the freshman class in the fall of 1966; prior to this, only three students of color in total had ever attended St. Lawrence University (Horning & Van de Water, 2005). These diversity efforts continued and, by 1968, there were over 25 students of color enrolled at the college (Blankman et al., 1987). As the late 1960's arrived and the peak of the tumultuous student protest movement began to take shape, fundamental shifts were occurring at St. Lawrence that would have a lasting impact in the 1970's and beyond.

4.6. Student Activism and Emerging Concerns with Greek Life, 1969 – 1978

At the height of the national student protest movement, on June 25, 1969, Frank Piskor was appointed as the new President of St. Lawrence University. He would immediately be thrown into several contentious conflicts with students, but Piskor was prepared. He was coming from Syracuse University, where he had been the top administrator on scene when, in 1968, the administration building was occupied by students (Blankman et al., 1987). Piskor would go on to serve as President for 11 years, navigating the University through arguably its most turbulent times since the 1880's. Biology Professor Tom Budd recalled, "He was a non-controversial, hardworking, really

nice guy. He did a lot of good but he was never challenging to the faculty so I would have to say that the faculty/administrative relationship was rather non-confrontational” (personal communication, September 20, 2016). These efforts would later earn Piskor the nickname “Papa Frank.”

Just weeks into Piskor’s first semester at St. Lawrence, on October 15, 1969, a nationwide moratorium in opposition to the war in Vietnam was scheduled at colleges across the country. The *Hill News* reported over 500 colleges across the country planned to cancel classes, so students pressured their new President to do the same (Blankman et al., 1987). Piskor declined and explained, “I feel strongly that the overriding obligation of the University is to teach, and I cannot in good conscience as a teacher myself authorize the cancellation of classes” (Blankman et al., 1987, p. 120). It was communicated to students that the decision of any individual to not attend class would be respected, but the institution would not take a position on this political issue (Blankman et al., 1987). Early into the spring semester, on February 6, 1970, the biggest challenge of Piskor’s first year in office came as a surprise to everyone. At dawn, the New York State Police arrived on campus and arrested ten students who lived in the residence halls for possession of illegal drugs. The administration cooperated with the investigation, while at the same time ensuring the students’ rights were protected (Blankman et al., 1987). This approach won praise from both Thelmo and the *Hill News*, which wrote, “Your actions following the raid have restored the waning student confidence that the administration...will stand by its students in times of crisis” (from Blankman et al., 1987, p. 125). According to Elaine White, Assistant to the Dean of Students, prior to the drug

bust the University's "security force" consisted of only one individual. "Jack Moon, he was here a long time and...he only worked in the daytime. He was a good ol' boy and a nice guy...who used to sit at the back of Sykes Hall and say, 'Hi!'" (White, personal communication). Within the backdrop of this incident, and in alignment with the contemporary trends in higher education at the time (Doyle, 2004), the Division of Student Affairs was renamed Student Services.⁵ Ginny Swartz, who originally joined the University in 1971 as the Dean of Women, recalled:

I think there were tensions in the 1960's between the Dean of Students and the students, so there was an attempt to change the Dean of Students' office away from a disciplinary focus to create an impression of a staff with a focus of working with, and for, students. Thus, Student Services. (personal communication, October 6, 2016)

The therapeutic approach to providing student support outside of the classroom, which would later be questioned by faculty, had commenced. As for the drug bust, it proved to be an unprecedented incident for this close-knit rural campus, opening the door for faculty to more closely scrutinize the growing disconnect between the academic environment and student life.

The other central conflict between students and administration, which would last for much of the Piskor presidency, was the debate over 24-hour visitation hours in the residence halls. A tripartite committee had submitted a proposal for each dormitory council to have full discretion over their own visitation policies, but it was rejected by the President. On February 20, 1970 – just 14 days after the drug raid – Piskor spoke to the issue of visitation, with over 800 students in attendance (Blankman et al., 1987). Again,

⁵ In an effort to make this study as clear as possible to the reader, this administrative division will be referred to as "student affairs" throughout this entire document.

Piskor declined to move on the issue and attempted to associate the drug problem with concerns related to the visitation policy; Thelmo responded aggressively by issuing an unauthorized implementation of the 24-hour visitation proposal (Blankman et al., 1987). The administration pushed back with a stern written warning; Thelmo responded aggressively once again by withdrawing student representatives from all tripartite University committees for the remainder of the 1969-1970 academic year (Blankman et al., 1987).

The first signs of disharmony between faculty and administration began to show around this time. In response to the visitation rights debate, three faculty members – including Philosophy Professor Henry “Bill” Crimmel – wrote an article in the *Hill News* criticizing the President’s rationale. They explained, “it is somewhat unfair to fault them on their inability to honor a code which they neither approve nor understand” (from Blankman et al., 1987, p. 127). The faculty contended the real problem was not the visitation policy, yet rather a fundamental flaw with the governmental structure of the college (Blankman et al., 1987).

Faculty considered the core problem at St. Lawrence to be the governing structure. Throughout the 1970’s, the influence of faculty on the direction of the University would increase considerably. According to Blankman et al. (1987), Foster Brown opened the door to broadened governance, but Frank Piskor was the President who made it work. Upon Piskor’s arrival in 1969, Faculty Council existed only as a proposal. At the January 1970 Board of Trustees meeting this proposal was approved, formally ushering in a new era of shared governance at St. Lawrence. Another major

academic change was the adoption of a 4-1-4 curriculum, featuring a winter “interterm” course, which was implemented beginning in the 1970-71 academic year (Blankman et al., 1987). Students at St. Lawrence also started experimenting with study abroad programs, with the University establishing its flagship Kenya program in 1974 (Hornung & Van de Water, 2005).

While progress occurred with shared governance and curricular development, the number of administrators continued to grow. Piskor named Allen Splete ’60 the Vice President for Academic Planning and Special Programs, making St. Lawrence the first liberal arts college in New York State to appoint a senior officer in academic planning (Blankman et al., 1987). Academic departments also continued to exert significant influence, as evidenced by the 1977 Middle States self-study, where they are described as:

So interwoven into the fabric of St. Lawrence that alternatives to departmentalization have never been seriously considered...by and large the University has prospered in a departmental structure...[but] departmentalism was probably the leading impairment to a successfully integrated [4-1-4] interterm program. (from Blankman et al., 1987, p. 177)

Later in his tenure, Piskor would attempt to reduce the responsibility of the Dean of the College by creating an Executive Vice President position, similar to the structure he had in place at Syracuse University; the faculty pushed back hard and demanded “their Dean” be nothing less than second in command (Blankman et al., 1987). The President quickly abandoned his proposal for a new position.

On Sunday, April 26, 1970, a St. Lawrence acapella group, the Laurentian Singers, performed at a worship service for President Nixon at the White House.

President Piskor and his wife were present. A week later, on May 4, 1970, the Kent State University tragedy occurred. Once again, President Piskor declined to cancel classes, but the students called a two-day strike on May 7 and 8. The following day, on May 9, 1970, Frank Piskor was formally inaugurated as the President of St. Lawrence University; at Commencement, a peace flag was carried next to the American flag during the procession.⁶ As Horowitz (1987) contends, following the Kent State killings the active student protest movement declined. The same proved to be true at St. Lawrence; with the exception of students continuing to petition for 24-hour visitation rights and co-ed housing, the politically-charged activism of the late 1960's quickly faded. Current St. Lawrence President William L. Fox '75 was quoted in *The Scarlet and the Brown* as saying, "some in the freshman class which entered in 1971 were innocent of knowing much about the intrusion of Southeast Asia into young lives" (from Blankman et al., 1987, p. 206).

In fall 1970, many of the tensions of the previous year started to subside. Faculty Council was up and running, while Thelmo agreed to place students back on tripartite committees. Despite this progress, Thelmo held the belief administration was "not taking students seriously" (Blankman et al., 1987, p. 120) in such roles. Questions about visitation rights soon reemerged, with the executive committee of Thelmo deliberately violating the policy in protest of no change being made on the issue. In spring 1972, Joseph "J.J." Jockel was elected President of Thelmo. Under his tenure, Thelmo would finally obtain student representation on the Board of Trustees. The following semester, a

⁶ Frank Piskor's inauguration ceremony was scheduled at the end of his first year of service as President, following the tumultuous 1969-70 academic year.

residence hall committee was formed to review the visitation policy. Jockel, echoing the recognized national trend of declining vibrancy in campus life, shared his perspective on the intuitional culture of St. Lawrence the 1970's:

I argued that while the faculty was pretty good and the facilities were tremendous, the academic environment was poor and weak. There was very little relationship between residential life and academic life. One didn't support the other; smart kids wanted to leave and I wanted to explore and enhance the environment, but as a kid I didn't have many ideas on how to do that. But I could see that we were living in two worlds. One, the academic world and then one, the residential-social world, and they had almost no relationship one to another. (Jockel, personal communication, September 2, 2016)

By 1974, the focus of Thelmo had shifted to also include co-ed housing. Once again, the administration balked and students protested. On March 15, 1974, over 300 students staged a sit-in in Vilas Hall to protest for co-ed housing. In fall 1975, the first co-ed housing was finally offered in Rebert Hall. In the 1977-78 academic year, students were still fighting for visitation rights, with Thelmo threatening to organize a massive sleep-over and passing a resolution in which they described the existing policy as "a restriction of individuals' freedom" (Blankman et al., 1987, p. 163). Soon afterward, Faculty Council unanimously passed a resolution recognizing in principle the right of students to determine their own living arrangements (Blankman et al., 1987).

Reflecting a trend across the nation, Greek life at St. Lawrence began to plateau during this time. At several liberal arts colleges in the Northeast, Greeks were being abolished or greatly diminished; as the faculty at St. Lawrence began to exert more influence on university affairs, they also started to become more vocal in their criticism about Greek life. During the Middle States review of 1976-77, notable concerns were raised to the review team by both faculty and independent students about the Greek

system. According to Blankman et al. (1987), the Middle States evaluation team stated fraternities and sororities “perform in a way that has little relationship to the goals and objectives of the University...In turn, many fraternity members feel that there is a lack of support or appreciation among the administration for them” (p. 215). Jockel concurred, illuminating the shadow side of the 1965 report on Greek life, and stating Greeks “were purely social and provided at that point almost no support for the academic mission of the institution...it really bugged me that the very best facilities were given to them with no question about it” (personal communication). One example of the negative impact of Greek life is a report, in 1976, that a fraternity house party had resulted in underage drinking and several freshmen women being sexually assaulted. According to Blankman et al. (1987), the incident was written about in the *Hill News*, while Piskor informed the Board of Trustees that, “although we viewed the allegation as a most serious matter, our investigations did not turn up any facts which supported the charges” (p. 158).

At this time, approximately 50 percent of the student body was a recognized member of a Greek organization (Blankman et al., 1987). Gauging how independent students felt about Greek life at St. Lawrence for much of its history is difficult. Each book chronicling the history of the institution dedicates an entire chapter exclusively to discussing fraternities and sororities. Each book also speaks glowingly of Greek contributions to the St. Lawrence story and praises the high character – particularly of the men – who comprised the membership of these organizations. Perhaps the finest example of this is given by Griffiths (1957) in *Candle in the Wilderness*, when he concludes:

Over the years fraternities and sororities have made a rich contribution to St. Lawrence. During underclass years they have stimulated competition for higher scholastic attainment and greater participation in all extracurricular activities....While fraternities have made some mistakes and have not always been managed as well as they should be, the chapter houses by and large have been a warm and welcome addition to the undergraduate life on the St. Lawrence campus. (p. 204-205)

Minority students continued to feel marginalized in the 1970's. According to Blankman et al. (1987), the Black Student Union felt the University could do more to attract students of color and demanded a larger role for BSU in the admissions process. Unfortunately, students of color also felt disconnected from their peers as well. According to Anthony Ross '75 in *The Scarlet and the Brown*, "In many cases it was my feeling, as well as the feeling of other black students, that we were at SLU as an afterthought, and Thelmo was no exception" (from Blankman et al., 1987, p. 213). This feeling of isolation felt by so many students of color would also be a concern raised by the faculty who formed the FYP.

Fiscal challenges would be significant throughout the 1970's, with inflation creating problems that were remedied by pulling in larger than anticipated incoming classes. While the college hoped to have a full-time enrollment of 2,000 students, throughout much of the 1970's the enrollment was higher than 2,200. This resulted in overcrowding in University housing. The energy crisis, and its corresponding gas shortages, also hit the nation at this time. It was under these conditions, in 1973, that another capital campaign, "Enterprise St. Lawrence," was launched. Unlike previous campaigns that focused on building construction, this effort was to strengthen the endowment of academic programs and student scholarships.

In 1972, the University's service employees voted by a 2-to-1 margin to unionize. In May 1973, they were unable to reach an agreement with administration through collective bargaining and a strike occurred. It lasted 24 days and, according to Blankman et al. (1987), it was "the most traumatic happening at the University" (p. 143). The majority of faculty on campus sympathized with the service workers and took their classes off-campus (Guarasci, personal communication, October 18, 2016). On the other hand, the administration, including most student affairs staff, had no choice but to step in and provide essential services to the students – such as serving meals – so the college could continue its basic functions. This incident further contributed to the tensions beginning to mount between faculty and administrators.

Despite the focus on activism movements, not all students at St. Lawrence subscribed to such liberal-learning efforts. Douglas Miles '73 was interviewed for *The Scarlett and the Brown* and explained:

I understood what the peace crowd wanted but my empathy was with fraternity brothers who had served in Vietnam...The silent non-sympathizers with the peace activism were probably at least a 70 percent majority of the campus then. We said nothing because the war was unpopular. The activists were a haughty youth on the right side of very powerful and fast-moving geopolitical trends, that being "leave Southeast Asia." We traditional collegiates crawled into our fraternity-sorority life and ritual. We wore our Bean boots, our Topsider moccasins, our hunting jackets and Alligator shirts and pretended all this "noise" was not really happening to our otherwise blissful and fun-filled four years. (from Blankman et al., 1987, p. 205)

Throughout the Piskor years, the *Hill News* focused extensively on concerns over academic tone at the University. Many student activists during the 1960's and 1970's were college "outsiders" (Horowitz, 1987). In the years to come, future opposition to Greek systems across the country – including at St. Lawrence – would come from

students fitting this profile, some of whom would go on to obtain their Ph.D.'s and become teaching faculty. Several interview participants in this study are examples of this type of student.

By the 1970's, faculty started to become more vocal about concerns regarding academic tone. Philosophy Professor Bill Crimmel, who questioned President Piskor on visitation rights just a few years earlier, was interviewed by the *Hill News* in spring of 1972 and, according to Blankman et al. (1987), shared his perspective that:

St. Lawrence was better than most colleges he had come in contact with but not as good as it could be. He saw the students' real interest as becoming well-adjusted rather than being well educated. The faculty, he said, 'has allowed itself to be dominated by administrative mentality.' (p. 141).

The following year, in 1973, Crimmel was asked by the *Hill News* to write a series of commentaries for the newspaper. The professor responded with letters in ten consecutive issues, with each being critical of the state of the academy (Blankman et al., 1987). In his first article, Crimmel shared his belief that the "St. Lawrence family" had disappeared because of the union strike. He would go on to criticize the focus on scholarship over teaching, departmentalism, the anti-intellectual attitudes of students, and the negative influence of Greek life, among other topics. Years later, many of these same concerns would play a fundamental role in shaping the faculty coalition of FYP supporters.

Faculty concerns with campus life became evident for the first time in an authorized University document when Commission on Residential Life released its final report in August 1976. A joint effort by faculty, students, administrators, and Board of Trustee members, the Commission noted how it was very clear "students and administrators tend to see St. Lawrence as a community while faculty exhibit a

preference for defining the institution as a place of work” (French et al., 1976, p. 2). The Greek system was also described by French et al. (1976) as exhibiting “resistance to the University-wide sense of community, preferring the cohesiveness of their own organizations” (p. 3). The Commission made a number of recommendations, leading to series of programmatic changes such as the creation of Faculty Fellows (in-residence) program, more educational programming in the residence halls, investments in facilities improvements, and the decision to convert nearby single-family homes owned by the University into student theme cottage residences (French et al., 1976). In the coming decade, future reports commissioned by faculty to review areas within the Division of Student Life would not be as conciliatory.

In light of the emerging turmoil between academic interests and harsh realities of a Greek-dominated campus life, it should come as no surprise that Professor Bill Crimmel taught a course, PHIL J-183, titled *Improving St. Lawrence*. The course description read:

Have you ever been bewildered by the fact that the curriculum of our college resembles a cafeteria more than a coherent program for the development of liberally educated people? Have you ever been angered by the fact that the motivational environment of our college give more support to sheep, meatheads, and boozers than to those who seek wisdom? Have you ever been depressed by the sneaking suspicion that all this lofty talk about liberal education may be just a cover-up for adolescent silting? This course provides an opportunity for students who are in some way disappointed with the quality of education at St. Lawrence to constructively articulate their criticism, to formulate their ideals in a philosophy of liberal education, and to devise a proposal for translating their ideals into actions which will improve the college. All proposals will be forwarded to the Dean of the College. (Crimmel, n.d.)

Two of Crimmel’s former students – J.J. Jockel ’74 and Grant Cornwell ’79 – would join the ranks of the faculty at St. Lawrence in the coming years. In conjunction with other

younger faculty – several of whom were graduates of the 1960's student activism era – they would put forward their own proposals for translating ideals into actions and incite the most transformational culture change in the history of the St. Lawrence University.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

In this study, I examined the internal conflict and cultural implications related to the founding and implementation of St. Lawrence University's First-Year Program (FYP), a comprehensive LLP aimed at supporting the first-year student transition. In this chapter, I present my findings from the historical document analysis performed, as well as the findings from fourteen interviews conducted with faculty and administrators. The methodology of my data collection and analysis is described in Chapter 3.

The findings of this study are presented vis-à-vis my research questions. This structure allows for a natural weaving of findings from historical documents and qualitative responses and perspectives of the interview participants. The result is a thick and detailed narrative outlining the history of St. Lawrence's FYP during its foundational years – a time period, for the purposes of this study, I have identified as 1977 to 1996. Since the four research sub-questions of this study were utilized as the basis of my interview protocol, the narrative history outlined in this chapter focuses on answering these questions:

1. What were the institutional culture conditions at St. Lawrence University in the 1970's and 1980's and how did they contribute to the formation of the FYP?
2. Why was a residential college model adopted for the FYP?
3. What cultural factors influenced the implementation and initial development of the FYP?
4. In what ways do faculty and administrators perceive institutional culture conditions have changed at St. Lawrence since the implementation of the FYP?

The two key research questions of this study, listed below, drove the data analysis methods of this study and formulate the basis of my final themes and conclusions discussed in Chapter 6.

1. How does institutional culture influence the creation and development of an LLP?
2. In what ways can an LLP reciprocally shape institutional culture?

5.1. Data Description

As described in Chapter 3, this case study utilized Saldana's (2013) Two Cycle method of coding for data analysis. In the first cycle of coding, all data sets were analyzed using both "In Vivo" coding, as well as values coding. Due to the nature of the research questions (RQs) posed by this study – and the application of Kuh & Whitt's (1988) *Framework for Analyzing Culture in Higher Education* – all "In Vivo" codes proved to be cultural factors, as well. The results of first cycle coding are displayed in Table 7 (RQ #1 and #2), Table 8 (RQ #3), and Table 9 (RQ #4). As these tables demonstrate, the overwhelming majority of interview participants agreed on many coded concepts, while several other concepts yielded agreement from the majority of interview participants. In this chapter, I explore these findings further.

The findings from Tables 7, 8, and 9 were further synthesized in an effort to "reflect on their collective meaning, interaction, and interplay, working under the premise that the three constructs are part of an interconnected system" (Saldana, 2013, p. 112). This resulted in a second cycle of coding in which the concept of axial coding was

Table 7: Causational Culture Conditions

RQ #1: What were the institutional culture conditions at St. Lawrence University in the 1970's and 1980's and how did they contribute to the formation of the FYP?

RQ #2: Why was a residential college model adopted for the FYP?

Descriptors												
Interview Participant	Academic Tone	Academic Skills	Academic/Residential Divide	No Trust, Student Life	Male Dominant	Greek Life	Indep.	"Change" Faculty	"Status Quo" Faculty	Admin.	Pres.	Gang of 4
Faculty – Supporters of FYP												
Jockel	X		X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X
Johnson	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
Kling	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Larsen	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X
Stoddard	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Thacker	X		X	X		X		X	X		X	
Administrators												
Cornwell	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			
Guarasci	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gulick	X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lehr	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Swartz	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
White	X			X		X		X		X	X	X
Faculty – Opponents of FYP												
Budd	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Perry*								X	X			
Primary Source Documents												
Artifacts	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
TOTAL (15)	14 (93%)	5 (33%)	11 (73%)	13 (87%)	8 (53%)	14 (93%)	9 (60%)	15 (100%)	14 (93%)	11 (73%)	8 (53%)	11 (73%)

* Perry provided a written statement in lieu of an interview

Table 8: Cultural Factors of Implementation and Development

RQ #3: What cultural factors influenced the implementation and initial development of the FYP?

Descriptors											
Interview Participant	Dept.	Race, Class, & Gender	Epist.	Recruit.	Alumni	Changing Students	“Change” Faculty	“Status Quo” Faculty	President	Guarasci	Cornwell
Faculty – Supporters of FYP											
Jockel	X					X	X	X	X	X	X
Johnson	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	
Kling		X	X				X	X		X	X
Larsen	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	
Stoddard	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Thacker	X			X	X	X	X	X			
Administrators											
Cornwell	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X
Guarasci	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
Gulick							X	X	X		
Lehr	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Swartz	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X
White							X		X	X	X
Faculty – Opponents of FYP											
Budd	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	
Perry*	X	X	X				X	X			
Primary Source Documents											
Artifacts	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
TOTAL (15)	12 (80%)	10 (67%)	10 (67%)	5 (33%)	5 (33%)	7 (47%)	15 (100%)	14 (93%)	10 (67%)	12 (80%)	8 (53%)

* Perry provided a written statement in lieu of an interview

Table 9: Perceived Change in Institutional Culture

RQ #4: In what ways do faculty and administrators perceive institutional culture conditions have changed at St. Lawrence University since the implementation of the FYP?

Descriptors								
Interview Participant	Peer Rel.	Faculty Rel.	Improved Academic Tone	Greek Life Decline	Special Hearing Board	Prof. Dev.	Positive Admin. Change	Interdisc.
Faculty – Supporters of FYP								
Jockel			X	X		X	X	
Johnson	X	X	X	X		X		X
Kling	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Larsen	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Stoddard		X		X	X	X	X	X
Thacker	X	X	X	X			X	X
Administrators								
Cornwell	X	X				X		
Guarasci			X			X	X	X
Gulick	X							
Lehr	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Swartz	X		X	X		X	X	X
White	X						X	
Faculty – Opponents of FYP								
Budd				X				
Perry*								
TOTAL (14)	9 (64%)	7 (50%)	8 (57%)	9 (64%)	3 (21%)	9 (64%)	7 (50%)	7 (50%)

* Perry provided a written statement in lieu of an interview

applied. The data was then reorganized in a way that helped explain the “if, when, how, and why” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 62) something happens. My final axial coding is displayed in Table 10; these findings formulate the basis of my concluding themes and are discussed at length in Chapter 6. With these identified axial codes, I seek to step away from the granular details of this particular case study and identify the three overarching, conclusive themes that may be transferable to other institutional contexts.

Table 10: Axial Coding

Code	Description
Relationships	The interpersonal relationships members of the campus community forge with one another are the fundamental building block of how culture forms – and how it can be changed
Culturally-Appreciative Lens	Understanding the fundamental values, assumptions, and beliefs of different institutional subcultures is critical; campus leaders who can interpret these factors, find common ground, and collaborate are more likely to succeed.
Resilience	Creating successful institutional culture change is hard; campus leaders need to be prepared and resilient to overcome the challenge.

5.2. Research Question 1: Preexisting Culture Conditions

In this section, I will provide a detailed description of the cultural conditions and events leading up to faculty approval of a new academic curriculum at St. Lawrence University in the fall of 1986. First, I will provide an overview of the interview participants’ perceptions of student, faculty, and administrative culture. I will then explore the campus events and faculty-led initiatives contributing to the creation of the FYP, focusing specifically on the time period of 1977 to 1986.

5.2.1. Student Culture

There were many similar responses from faculty and administrators when asked about the St. Lawrence student culture in the late 1970's and 1980's. The two most prominent cultural factors were an anti-intellectual academic tone, in addition to a dominant Greek life fueling a social atmosphere commonly referred to as a "party culture." Interview participants also identified an intellectually curious group of outsider students, as Thacker noted:

When I got here [in 1983], one of the things I still remember pretty vividly was that it seemed to me the students I was trying to teach really were kind of two sorts. They were either fairly standard focused undergraduates, or they were kind of indulged idiots who seemed to think that college was all about bogeying and the social dimensions. They were trying to do as little academic work as possible under the circumstances. (personal communication, September 3, 2016).

According to Guarasci, "there was this feeling amongst a number of us [faculty] that there was kind of an anti-intellectualism amongst the student body" (personal communication). Kling illustrated this concern when he shared, "They had morning parties in those days. I'm talking about Wednesday or Thursday...students would have a few drinks before [they] go to class" (personal communication, September 14, 2016).

When discussing the academic tone on campus, Johnson identified how it negatively impacted the classroom dynamic:

I arrived in January of 1972....it was obvious that you were not rewarded for becoming intellectually engaged in the conversation in the classroom by the other students. That was discouraged...so it was hard frequently to get students engaged in intellectual activities. (Johnson, personal communication)

The dominance of Greek life was easily the most frequent topic raised by interview participants when asked about student culture. Swartz recalled:

What I remember the most...was that campus life was dominated by the Greek system. I don't think the Greeks were the majority of students, but their influence dominated campus life. They certainly created campus social life. They dominated student government and they were very involved in campus leadership positions. (personal communication)

Other interview participants concurred with this assessment, stating, "When I got here in the fall of 1977, it was run by the Greeks and it was also very white. It was where middle- and upper-middle management parents sent their boys, very prep-schooly" (Larsen, personal communication, August 18, 2016). Lehr noted jokingly, "It was like the *Preppy Handbook*, which we actually had in the library" (personal communication, August 16, 2016). Even Tom Budd, who was an ardent opponent of the FYP, agreed with the perception that Greek life at St. Lawrence was dominant at this time:

About half of the students at the time were in the Greek system and...that also happened to be basically the social system on campus, because they're the ones that could afford and be organized enough to have parties. So back then St. Lawrence was known as a party school, and probably deservedly so, because the students knew how to have a good time and they had a lot of parties, a lot of alcohol, and a lot of dancing. (Budd)

In addition to the negative classroom dynamics noted by Johnson, the strong presence of Greek life also impacted social life on campus. Guarasci noted how they "rushed freshmen in the second semester," but were also "actively recruiting them in the first semester as soon as they got there – if not before they actually showed up" (personal communication). Swartz provided further insight into how ingrained the recruitment process was by emphasizing:

I can remember having a staff of RAs where out of 12 RAs, 10 were from the Greek system. Most of the orientation leaders were members of the Greek system. I believe that the Greek houses urged their members to be involved as a way to have an influence and recruit members. (personal communication)

The high degree of Greek involvement with the orientation program was supported by Kling, who shared, “After the day-long orientation...the nights were open. And there would be these roaming bands of kids up and down Park Street, looking for action. And the fraternities were open and this is where they go after the women” (personal communication). Swartz further clarified how Greek dominance directly shaped the first-year student experience:

Imagine how hard it would be to avoid the Greek system. There were twelve Greek houses on campus....not rushing meant feeling left out. All of this right when you are trying to adjust to the new academic demands of college. And if you decided to rush, and you were not selected by any Greek house, you had to face social rejection. (Swartz, personal communication)

One interesting finding was shared by Budd, who discussed how close some faculty were to the Greek system:

The Greek parties weren’t just for the Greeks. They were for the whole campus. Everybody would show up and have a great time. In fact, I can’t tell you the number of times that I would see faculty at the social functions. They partied just as much as the students did. (personal communication)

Budd went on to share how he served as a chapter advisor to one of the fraternities, Phi Kappa Sigma. “I became a brother....I found it to be not only interesting, but it let me really understand what a fraternal organization is” (Budd, personal communication). He also discussed how his son, when he was in grade school, would be dropped off at the Phi Kap house by the bus. “[He] would watch cartoons...have a snack, or sometimes we’d stay and have dinner...they treated him like one of their kids” (Budd, personal communication).

A male-dominant presence to the campus also existed, with fraternities playing a more prominent role than sororities in shaping this culture. “I was struck by how strong

the Greek system was, and particularly the fraternities because the fraternities seem to run the student social lives” (Thacker, personal communication). Guarasci noted how “misogyny [was] accepted by the women as much as the men” (personal communication). Kling shared, “It was predatory in terms of the relationship between the men and the women. First-year women were targets” (personal communication). This assessment was supported by Stoddard, who noted:

I went to a women’s college and in many ways, it was very striking to me when I came to St. Lawrence. Although they bragged about being the oldest co-educational college or whatever in New York, it was a very male-dominated college. If I hadn’t known better, I would have thought it was an all-male college that got turned into a co-ed college. (personal communication, September 22, 2016)

Independent “outsider” subcultures also existed on campus, some of whom referred to themselves as *GDI*’s. “As I recall, GDI stood for ‘God Damn Independent’ . . . at times, campus life was a challenge for these independent students” (Swartz, personal communication). Guarasci clarified what many of these GDI’s were like:

There was always a cohort of students who were intellectually curious and engaged; they were not completely outside the culture, but they were to the side of it. They could party once in a while but they were more or less trying to discover a world for themselves, some became really interesting alumni. (personal communication)

Cornwell, who is a 1979 graduate of St. Lawrence and a member of a “counter-culture fraternity,” shared his first-hand perspective:

I think it was actually a pretty intellectually rich student culture; it could have been the circles I traveled in, but I don’t really think so . . . the Greek frat boys were just kind of looked at as being yahoos and we didn’t take them very seriously. (personal communication, October 3, 2016)

Despite these complex cultural dynamics, Dr. Lawry Gulick noted the following upon his arrival to campus as the new President in 1981, “They [the students] loved the place – that is the most dominant thing, they really loved the place and seemed to be very loyal to it” (personal communication, October 13, 2016). This intense passion for the institution, a central part of the culture since St. Lawrence’s earliest days, would prove to be one of the key obstacles to change in the coming years.

5.2.2. Faculty Culture

In the 1970’s, St. Lawrence was a very friendly place. “Minnesota-nice” was how Guarasci, who arrived in 1973, described it. As Johnson recalled:

The University as a whole was a smaller, more isolated and, therefore, more unified and collegial place...I don’t mean that we all saw the world alike, but I mean there was more socialization and we knew one another more than we do now. I believe, in general, there was more of a sense...that we shared a mission, of which the University was a big part. (personal communication)

However, like the student culture, by the mid-1980’s the faculty culture at St. Lawrence was split between two distinct factions. One group – consisting predominantly of older, male faculty – were comfortable with a Greek-dominant student culture and viewed the University as an institution in very good standing. Professor Budd’s earlier comments on student culture are a strong illustration of this faculty subculture’s perspective. The other group, comprised mostly of younger junior faculty – sought change in both the academic curriculum and within student life; it is this group that would later form the coalition that created the FYP.

When asked to describe the faculty upon his arrival in 1983, Thacker stated, “Mediocre...I found this to be in a lot of ways a self-satisfied and smug place” (personal

communication). This response aligns with President Gulick's assessment of the faculty when he arrived two years earlier:

There didn't seem to be a lot of emphasis on academics....the faculty's expectations were mediocre, the administration was sort of mediocre....The main problem with the trustees was they were afraid to compete financially so they were sort of looping along, happy with the status quo. (personal communication)

In describing the male-dominant faculty culture of the 1970's, Guarasci explained:

This was pretty much a staid nuclear family kind of predominant culture that married itself to the student culture I guess in some way. So, the faculty culture was still being run by people like that; they set a tone, an expectation – jackets and ties, that sort of thing. Not a lot of women on the faculty...in the early seventies when I first got there. It all changed in the eighties. (personal communication)

What changed in the 1980's were a few factors. First, the institution started to "hire women faculty in significant percentages" (Lehr, personal communication). Second, the student activism of the 1960's was beginning to permeate faculty culture, particularly among the ranks of the younger, junior faculty. This is embodied by Johnson's perspective on the role of faculty within the academy:

This was a liberal arts college and part of the role as a faculty member was to be devoted to the health of the institution, not necessarily as the administration saw it, but as the faculty saw it. Hopefully we work with the administration, but you should expect antagonism and be willing to be antagonistic when necessary. [There was] the sense of a liberal arts college as distinct from a university, and that at a liberal arts college you were devoted to the institution alongside your devotion to your discipline. (personal communication)

The other common response from interview participants when asked about faculty culture was the strong presence of departmentalism. Jockel, a 1974 graduate, noted:

I had been away for six years and now was coming back [in 1980]. It was still friendly and accessible – but I was struck powerfully, and I would not have even realized this as a kid, how departmentalized it was....the departmentalization was just enormous. (personal communication)

Guarasci explained further:

The department culture was this is where power lies; it lies with department chairs and departments and you'd better saddle up as a faculty member and be well accepted in your department and socialize there and figure it all out for yourself. (personal communication)

5.2.3. Administrative Culture

Faculty perceptions of administration – and particularly the Division of Student Affairs – split along the lines of the two groups previously discussed. Older faculty, or those who supported the Greek system, generally held a favorable view of administration. Younger faculty who perceived the Greek system to be a contributing factor to the anti-intellectual academic tone of campus did not trust administrators. As articulated by Larsen, “The faculty didn’t think student life was at all competent” (personal communication). This perception was supported by Guarasci, who shared, “the full payers and their fraternity and sorority units shaped the social party life of the campus – with much support from Student Life” (personal communication), as well as Stoddard, who felt, “administrative culture and the student culture were totally aligned with each other, and the faculty culture was not aligned with either one of them” (personal communication). Faculty dissatisfaction was not a secret to the student affairs staff, as White attested:

The faculty didn’t think a whole lot of the student affairs area. The faculty did their thing and we tried to take care of everything outside of the classroom. Then the things we were doing, especially with the Greeks, they would get upset. But most of the faculty didn’t care for them [Greeks] and didn’t want them here. (personal communication)

One example of both departmentalism and the chasm of mistrust between faculty and administration is the story Jockel shared about his hiring process:

I had been hired to be what I thought was going to be a Government in Canadian Studies professor, and when I got here the Government department said, “Wait a minute, who hired you?” I said, “The search committee”...and they said, “Well, we didn’t approve of this.” (personal communication)

Jockel went on to share, “They thought I was going to be [Allen] Splete’s plant in the faculty and an administrative toad, which is ironic....five years later I’m on the barricades with them attacking fraternities” (personal communication). Jockel went on to disclose, “There was...suspicion of administrators much more so than today, actually...I’m a product of those years. I still retain the suspicion of administrators, in general” (personal communication). This distrust between faculty and administrators would ultimately have an impact on the future direction of the FYP.

5.2.4. The BASK Program

By the late 1970’s, faculty started to take action on the perceived issues with academic tone on campus. One of their first formal efforts was the creation of an Ad Hoc Committee on Written and Oral expression, chaired by Librarian Jon Lindgren. On May 11, 1977, the Ad Hoc Committee issued their final report. Originally charged with identifying “ways to make sure graduating students have achieved a decent competence in expressing themselves in English...[it] made no distinction between writing and speaking competence” (Lindgren et al., 1977, p. 1). The final report identified a number of recommendations to strengthen student competency in written and oral communication, including the following:

Public speaking, debate, and extemporary speaking should be integrally incorporated into any new proposed Freshman Year Program...An example might be the inclusion of a core course for freshman aimed toward integrated development of students' speech-logic-writing-research skills. (Lindgren et al., 1977, p. 8)

The following year, the BASK program – which stood for “Basic Academic Skills” – was created by Johnson and co-taught with English Professor Stephanie Yearwood. Yearwood had also served on the Ad Hoc Committee on Written and Oral expression. Johnson created the course and recalled:

The origin of [BASK] was I was teaching logic, introductory logic, and I'd gotten onto a book by a guy named Michael Scriven...Informal logic was an attempt to more directly improve people's thinking, critical thinking....I started creating a course based on his book and I quickly realized that in order to do this right, we needed to do research. (personal communication)

In 1978, a summer planning group was formed to implement the program. BASK ultimately tied a 1-unit English Composition course together with a 1-unit Informal Logic course, while also incorporating a series of 10 weekly library workshops (Larsen, 2007). According to Johnson, “the writing course would be devoted to the creation of arguments” (personal communication). Students who enrolled in this package of course offerings received 3-units of credit, with the goal being to “tackle the interlocking challenge...to improve their writing and at the same time, be able to analyze and critique arguments” (Larsen, 2007, p. 1). Librarians Joan Larsen and John Lindgren were also instrumental in the planning of BASK, for it was recognized that “students had to be able to verify facts and find information if they were to write and critique arguments” (Larsen, 2007, p. 1). BASK was launched in fall 1979 and would run for several years. The program did not include a residential component, but did influence East College, the

University's first experimental residential learning community that would be implemented a few years later.

5.2.5. Committee on the Academic Environment

In February 1983, a Committee on the Academic Environment (CAE) was commissioned by the faculty. The concept of this committee was originally presented to the faculty by Crimmel (St. Lawrence Faculty Minutes, 1983). The committee was chaired by Johnson, who had recently created BASK, and was charged with:

Investigating all aspects of residential life at St. Lawrence as these relate to the academic and intellectual mission of the university [and] with making recommendations for the enhancement of residential, intellectual and academic life, and with educating the university community with regard to its recommendations. (Johnson et al., 1984, p. 1)

Johnson was appointed chair of CAE after speaking up at a faculty meeting, expressing concern about student culture:

It was brought about by...the general perception that we just didn't have the kind of culture on campus...that we wanted to have. We didn't have enough intellectually engaged students...we had a party culture and behavior that was just out of control. (Johnson, personal communication)

One year later, on February 9, 1984, the CAE submitted its final report. The conclusion reached by Johnson et al. (1984) reaffirmed the concerns many faculty had expressed for years, calling on the entire campus to "renew their commitment to community...[it] has a purpose, and that purpose is education" (p. 2). More importantly, the CAE called for curricular change that would integrate academic and residential life by explaining:

St. Lawrence – while remaining true to itself and its best traditions – must find ways of integrating intellectual and social life more fully than they are at present....Indeed, the dominant social conventions seem to discourage discussion,

both inside and outside the classroom, of intellectual issues....Our proposals are designed to foster involvement and participation in the intellectual quest by adjusting current activities as well as introducing new ones. Students come to us intellectually unformed but curious and alert to new ideas and perspectives. The intellectual atmosphere they encounter during their college years can determine whether or not this spark of curiosity is encouraged to flame. (p. 1-2)

The CAE then issued a series of recommendations, all focusing on increasing opportunities for faculty-student interactions. These included significantly bolstering involvement of faculty and academic-focused content into Orientation, strengthening academic advising, establishing an honors program, and – most notably – endorsing “the principle of moving with cautious, yet deliberate speed toward the eventual placement of all freshmen in freshmen residential colleges” (Johnson et al., 1984, p. 10). The call for a First-Year Program had officially begun.

5.2.6. The Beta House Fire and the Ad Hoc Report

By 1983, St. Lawrence had seven fraternities and five sororities, for a total of 12 active Greek organizations. On the early morning of February 20, 1983 – the same month the faculty commissioned the Committee on the Academic Environment – a fire broke out at the Beta Theta Pi chapter house. According to the *Hill News*, when the fire department arrived, fraternity members “were yelling and screaming profanities and obscenities” and physically grabbed and pushed the Fire Chief (Wisbey, Strich, & Secor, 1983). This incident proved to be the flashpoint for future faculty action on concerns with the Greek system (Marden et al., 1987). At this time, there were several Beta alums serving in prominent leadership positions on campus, including Vice President of Student Affairs Peter Van de Water ‘56, Vice President of Academic Planning and Special Programs Allen Splete ‘60, and Vice President for Development Sarge Whittier ‘57.

When asked about the Beta fire, White shared, “I just have this picture of Allen Splete and my boss [Van de Water] out there saving the Beta sign” (personal communication). Jockel recalled, “Peter [Van de Water] had been President of Beta, so I don’t want to give the impression these were hidden struggles...he would say, frequently and publically, our students need fraternities and sororities” (personal communication). At a faculty meeting in May 1983, Van de Water attempted to explain how Student Life was trying to hold students accountable, while speaking positively about possibilities for future collaborations with faculty outside of the classroom (Van de Water, 1983). Not surprisingly, it was widely perceived by the faculty that Beta Theta Pi was simply being protected following the incident.

In direct response to the Beta house fire incident, on May 4, 1983, President Gulick proposed, and Faculty Council authorized, the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee on Greek Life. This tripartite committee was chaired by Government professor Richard Guarasci, who would become the first Director of the FYP just three years later. The following spring, on March 1, 1984, the committee released its final report and concluded:

The individual freedoms and choices available to all of us at the university are constrained by the mutual obligations and responsibilities necessary for a public order...The central thesis of this committee reaffirms the principle that the public order must rest upon a foundation of democratic jurisprudence (Guarasci et al., 1984, p. 4)

Working within this framework, Guarasci et al. (1984) identified four key recommendations, outlined in Table 11. Most notably, Guarasci et al. (1984) identified the need to “alter the residential pattern” (p. 6) of the University and felt “significant and

far reaching reforms are required in the ‘freshman experience’” (p. 6). The committee reaffirmed the preexisting proposals for co-ed and class-integrated First-Year residential housing recently made by the Committee on Academic Environment. The committee

Table 11: Recommendations of Ad Hoc Committee on Greek Life

No.	Description
Recommendation 1	The freshman residential pattern should be integrated by class and gender with a variety of living options, including the extension of the residential college system. Space and funds should be provided for social and intellectual interaction within dormitories. (p. 12)
Recommendation 2	Formal Greek Rush should be delayed until the commencement of the sophomore year and an appropriate change in the current occupancy policy for Greek houses must be instituted in order to ensure the survival of the Greek system. (p. 14)
Recommendation 3	A standing Board of Faculty Advisors to work with Pan Hellenic Council, The Interfraternity Council, and each of the Greek organizations should be created to develop a code of minimum standards for Greek life and to advise the leadership on its administration. Such a code should address the purpose, demeanor, and enforcement of the Greek system and its regulations. (p. 16)
Recommendation 4	A student and faculty standing committee on investigation to be known as The Joint Board of Inquiry, should be created for the purpose of receiving complaints in violation of the student code from any member or organization in the community... Membership will be composed of four students and three faculty with the chairperson selected by the committee. (p. 19)

described their recommendation to delay Greek Rush until sophomore year as “a realistic means of allowing the freshman year to enjoy its own revitalized dynamic, pointing us

toward our goal of becoming a ‘community of persons’” (Guarasci et al., 1984, p. 6).

Each recommendation received unanimous support, with the exception of moving Greek Rush to sophomore year. This resolution did pass the committee by a 6-3 vote, yet two student members opted to write a dissenting addendum. The dissent argued any delay in Greek rush would “severely weaken the entire Greek system” (Ness & Odai, 1984, p. 26), while at the same time, claimed pledging in the first year “provides numerous opportunities for academic, personal and social growth” (p. 26). According to White, “whether or not [the faculty] believed in eliminating...the Greek culture, I don’t know; certainly Peter Van de Water didn’t want to do that. He wanted them to be better campus citizens” (personal communication). President Gulick would ultimately choose to approve all recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee, with the exception of one – he sided with the dissenting students, and a deferment of Greek rush to sophomore year was rejected. This decision upset many faculty and would ultimately hinder Lawry Gulick for the remainder of his presidency, as many perceived it as a “symbolic importance about where the University placed its priorities concerning fraternities and sororities” (Marden et al., 1987, p. 5). Indeed, Guarasci lamented, “that commission, which we brought to the full faculty, passed something like 82-3...then he refused to accept it, and it probably cost him his presidency...he lost the faculty at that point” (personal communication). Jockel also conceded, “in retrospect, [Gulick] was also supportive of fraternities; he was a big fraternity guy” (personal communication).

5.2.7. The “Flying Blue Max”

On April 7, 1984, one month after the Ad Hoc Committee report was issued, the Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE) fraternity was involved in a serious disciplinary incident bringing them before the newly-formed Joint Board of Inquiry (JBI). The incident in question was the unlivable house conditions at SAE, as well as a fraternity chapter tradition known as the “Flying Blue Max.” According to Larsen, this act involved a fraternity member grabbing a female student and “turning her upside down and biting her on the butt” (personal communication, August 16, 2016). This bite would leave a deep bruise – which SAE dubbed the “flying blue max.” The JBI (1984) called it an act of “sexism, unwillingness of members to control each other, disrespect for the house, neighbors, and others” (p. 1). Thacker served on the JBI and recalled asking SAE leadership during the hearing how they contributed to the academic goals of the University. The student’s response was, “Gee, Dr. Thacker, that’s a tough one” (from personal communication, September 3, 2016). The JBI’s final report was a scathing assessment of both the fraternity and the Division of Student Affairs:

The social climate is unlikely to improve without major alterations in the relationship of the fraternity to the university and in the status of the SAE house itself...The social problems which gave rise to the Blue Max incident...are inextricably associated with the evolution of a fraternity unfettered by any meaningful guidance, whether internal or external. (Joint Board of Inquiry, 1984, p. 1)

In a final affirmation, indicating the new direction of how Greek affairs would be addressed at the University moving forward, the Joint Board of Inquiry (1984) concluded,

There is not now nor has there been for at least the past decade any articulable vision of the fraternity as a contributing portion of a larger academic and social entity – the university, the community, the world – for whose sake it is necessary to act responsibly, to foster excellence, to develop a social conscience...It would seem that the university has the minimal obligation of fulfilling the gap left by the

lack of purpose by making sure that students live in an atmosphere conducive to, or at least not inimical to, academic pursuits. (p. 4)

5.2.8. The Departure of Van de Water

At the end of the 1983-84 academic year, long-time Vice President for Student Affairs Peter Van de Water '56 resigned and relocated to New England where he served as a Headmaster to a private preparatory school. White, Van de Water's administrative assistant throughout his tenure as Vice President, recalled "he was just a nice person and wanted everyone to be nice" and further explained:

The faculty were a little upset with him, yeah....I'm not really sure why they were all upset; from my perspective, he was doing what he needed to do, but I believe they thought that whatever he was doing wasn't right – wasn't what the University needed.... it was tough on him the last couple of years. (personal communication)

Guarasci shared his thoughts on Van de Water and his staff, revealing the complex relational dynamic between faculty and student affairs at the small, rural liberal arts college:

Really nice guy; these were nice people...I always was friends with them, but we always found ourselves on opposite sides....He had the old conventional model, a therapeutic model of student life....about therapy, providing mental health services, medical services, helping kids adjust, so it was a status quo model, right?...We wanted students to be engaged, we wanted to challenge them; we wanted them to challenge each other and the academy. (personal communication)

Budd, a faculty member who supported the Greek system, shared a different perspective on Van de Water and his long-time Dean of Students, Lou Saltrelli:

I thought he genuinely had the students' best interests at heart. He was one of the few people...who would really go to bat for the students and support them. When they would be under attack from the faculty, he tended to be an honest broker, which probably got him in trouble quite a few times with some of the faculty and administrators. (personal communication)

Van de Water was succeeded by an internal candidate, David Howison, who had been at St. Lawrence since 1968 and previously served as the Director of the E.J. Noble University Center. Howison brought a well-rounded resume to the position. He held an Ed.D. in Higher Education from Indiana University, was an adjunct instructor in the Education Department, and was also the President of the Chamber of Commerce and the local community running club. Faculty who had concerns with the Greek system had reservations, as Thacker explained “he was a nice man, but he certainly wasn’t a Dean who was going to be confronting the fraternities in any real way” (personal communication, September 3, 2016). During the next three years, a number of other faculty committees would question the ‘therapeutic approach’ of student affairs practitioners at St. Lawrence. At this same time, in the summer of 1984, the national drinking age was raised from 18 to 21 – a policy that would forever change the nature of student culture on college campuses and further complicated the challenges facing the Division of Student Affairs.

5.2.9. The Gulick White Paper

In 1981, W. Lawrence “Lawry” Gulick was named President of St. Lawrence University following the retirement of Frank Piskor. Gulick came from Hamilton College, where he had been the Provost. He was a former Marine and was very proud of his reputation as a teacher. He viewed teaching as the primary responsibility of the faculty, with scholarship being a secondary task; as Gulick himself explained, “the best, of course, would be an excellent teacher and one who is moderately productive [with research]” (personal communication, October 13, 2016). Thacker agreed with this

assessment, stating “he identified as a faculty president...when Gulick came in, he had no intention of doing any building, okay? What he was really doing was trying to develop the institution in ways that needed developing” (personal communication, September 3, 2016). Budd offered a different perspective, stating, “I saw a real growth of an adversarial relationship...I don’t think he respected many faculty. I think he thought most of us were a bunch of whiners” (personal communication). In describing the status quo institutional culture he entered into in 1981, the former President shared:

My predecessor, President Piskor, had been there for at least 12 years. He gave up the presidency and recommended Allen Splete, one of his favorite people, should succeed him. The trustees picked me instead, so he was not really friendly toward me. [Piskor] came to board meetings, which made it very awkward for me to present what I thought were weaknesses and where we needed to make changes. (personal communication)

Gulick would serve as President at St. Lawrence for only six years and, despite his reluctance to push back hard on the Greek system, his vision would leave a lasting impact on the institution. Guarasci acknowledged, “Lawry licensed all those serious deep conversations around having a much more formative curriculum” (personal communication). Gulick explained his approach to the presidency as, “I didn’t do much except listen in the first two years, but I got some things started and then off I went. I made a lot of people mad, but I got a lot of things done” (personal communication). One faculty group the new President met with frequently were dubbed “The Gang of Four,” and included Parker Marden, J.J. Jockel, Richard Guarasci, and Bob Swartz. Jockel recalled, “we would go out to dinner with the President and try and push things along” (personal communication).

Gulick's effort to change the institution began with a document he prepared for the Board of Trustees, titled *Directions for St. Lawrence University*, on October 15, 1984. It is remembered today as the *Gulick White Paper*. It discussed four broad considerations for contemporary liberal arts colleges, critiqued the anti-intellectual culture of St. Lawrence University, and identified 12 proposals for change. It was a brutally honest assessment of the state of the academy, rejecting the status quo while challenging the faculty and empowering them to seek change that would ultimately lead to the establishment of the FYP and many other academic reforms. Gulick (1986) laid out his vision for the institution:

Simply, our task as a community of learners is to fashion an environment in which education in all its forms has the best prospect of enlarging our souls, exciting our intellects, stimulating our capacity to wonder, and giving us new and broader visions and understanding of our world, ourselves, and our responsibilities. (p. 9)

To meet this objective, the President identified the importance of academic and residential integration by arguing:

It will require strengthening our curriculum as it applies to general education so as to make it distinctive and at once strengthening the ties to other concerns of our lives so that a residence becomes more than a place to live and sleep and extra- and para-curricular activities serve better than they do now to enhance the intellectual life on campus. (Gulick, 1984, p. 9)

The President's recommendations echoed the concerns many faculty had been voicing for much of the past decade. He supported the experimental residential colleges, expressed interest in establishing a senior year seminar, advocated for strengthening student oral communication skills, and – perhaps most importantly – identified a dire need to improve the academic tone on campus (Gulick, 1984).

5.2.10. East College and the Experimental Residential Colleges

In fall 1983, four years after the BASK program was launched, East College was created. Developed by Sociology professor Parker Marden and Canadian Studies professor J.J. Jockel '74, this experimental program was St. Lawrence's first residential learning community and was inspired by the residential college models at Oxford and Cambridge. Jockel explained, "my perception of the culture [as a former student]...had an enormous impact and actually led to my interest in working with Parker" (personal communication). Frustrated by the lack of repercussions following the Beta fire earlier that spring, Jockel and Parker directly approached President Gulick requesting to create an alternative residential model. Jockel recalled, "If he hadn't said yes, none of this would have happened" (personal communication). This experimental program had four key goals:

It was hoped that a sense of community would be created within the College...that members of the College would blend academic and non-academic concerns in a dormitory setting that has historically not been oriented to the first set of interests...that the common course would provide the focal point for many of the students' intellectual efforts...[and] that the College might offer a model for a new, more intensive system of advisement for freshmen." (Marden, 1984, p. 1-2)

East College was a year-long program with all students living together as a cohort in East Hall. This building was a recently-built residence hall, originally constructed to be a fraternity house following recommendations from the 1965 consultant report on Greek life. Jockel specifically sought out this building due to its Greek connections:

I remember when Parker said, 'Well, let's have a theme cottage' and I said, 'No, I'm not going to do a theme cottage for a couple of reasons – too small and I want to grab a building that is the same size as a fraternity to show what you can do with that kind of real estate.' (personal communication)

First-year student participants enrolled in one shared course in the fall, *The Nature of Evidence*, focusing on “the development of attitudes that support the enterprise of scholarship...diagnose any problems in effective communication of good ideas...and encourage [students] to look for new topics to explore and to seek independence in their own education” (Marden & Jockel, 1983, p. 1-2). This was followed by a spring course titled, *Tradition and Change: The Twentieth Century Takes Form*. Each course was team-taught by Marden and Jockel. An innovative feature to East College was its enlistment of “Tutor/Advisors,” who were other faculty on campus serving in the capacity of advisors; according to Jockel, President Gulick also participated as a mentor in the program. The mentors were encouraged to attend various co-curricular activities planned throughout the year inside East Hall.

Following the initial success of East College, several other experimental residential colleges were established. Two additional communities for first-year students were launched, New College in fall 1984 followed by South Hall in fall 1985. Residential colleges also offered as housing alternatives for upperclass students who were struggling to find their place on campus. In fall 1984, the I-House was founded by University Chaplin Ted Linn. This community was open to all students and sought to promote diversity and inclusion through the establishment of residential space where individuals could live with others from different ethnic and racial backgrounds. In fall 1985, Commons College was created by a group of students who called themselves the “Committee for an Alternative at St. Lawrence,” or CAST. Kling served as the faculty advisor to CAST and recalled,

They felt excluded...they were intellectually curious, they wanted the education to be challenging and they felt this was not what the university was about. And they were right, it was about the social life. It was about the parties. It was about the drinking. (personal communication, September 14, 2016)

Kling also shared Commons College was Guarasci's idea, with the general concept being a sophomore residential college where "students would create their own course, have their own dorm, and direct their own social life" (personal communication). He also recalled, "I had a terrible fight in getting housing for them....Residence Life didn't want to give up rooms to these crazy, rebel kids....it was all part of a resistance on the part of the administration on innovation, on something new" (Kling, personal communication).

Due to the success of the experimental residential colleges, Parker Marden organized a conference on "The Integration of Academic and Residential Life" in fall 1985, hosted by St. Lawrence University. The recently-formed residential colleges were the focal point of this conference. In his introductory speech at the conference, Marden (1985) explained:

In trying new academic and residential arrangements, we are clearly dealing with an important part of the University's distinctive character....residential life is an inseparable part of how we educate undergraduates....academic interest and residential concerns support the educational needs of the same students and do so together" (p. 2).

Marden (1985) also made it clear the true role of residential colleges at St. Lawrence, by stating, "The colleges are first and foremost academic experiments. Although they are placed in residential halls, and the enhancement of the quality of residential life is one of their goals, they are not primarily residential experiments" (p. 2). Citing historical precedent, he further clarified:

They also differ from the House systems at Harvard, Yale, Pennsylvania, and now Princeton. Such efforts were largely attempts to introduce some scale and a sense of community into academically-challenging institutions that could often be very anonymous. Here, the ambitions are different. We are trying to enrich academic life by blurring the distinction between the classroom and residential life at an institution where life is comfortable and personal and a sense of community is realized. (Marden, 1985, p. 2)

Acknowledging the conflict beginning to emerge on campus due to the residential colleges, Marden (1985) noted in his remarks “the fact that the experiments seen as divisive by some reflects both this comfort [with community] and the valuation of life at close quarters” (p. 3).

In spring 1986, a review of all experimental residential colleges was performed. The committee consisted of two external participants and two internal administrators. As shown in Table 12, the shared goals of this system of residential communities were identified by Fox, Howison, Murphy, & Tauber (1986) as:

Table 12: Shared Goals of Experimental Residential Colleges

No.	Description
Goal 1	“To create a residential atmosphere that is conducive to intellectual development” (p. 1).
Goal 2	“To advance the notion that learning continues outside of the classroom through intellectual relationships with both peers and faculty members” (p. 1).
Goal 3	“To foster intellectual curiosity, active inquiry, and passion for learning as opposed to mere working for grades” (p. 1).
Goal 4	“To encourage involvement in various co-curricular activities designed to foster the sense of shared purpose and common endeavor that is implied by St. Lawrence’s claim that it is a ‘Community of Learners’ and to create an atmosphere of intellectual and social vitality in which the University community as a whole can participate” (p. 1).

Goal 5	“To foster more effective academic advising by intensifying the intellectual bond between the student and the advisor” (p. 1).
Goal 6	“To create a co-educational living environment that will foster respect for the academic and personal needs of men and women” (p. 1).

The review committee, which included Vice President of Student Life David Howison, strongly supported the direction of these collective goals. Despite acknowledgement the overall system was still in an “embryonic stage,” Fox et al. (1986) concluded “the Residential Colleges have made a significant difference in the intellectual development of a number of St. Lawrence students, and the potential for both broadening and intensifying that effect is great” (p. 1).

5.2.11. Greek Debate Continues: Reciprocal Standards vs. CAGS

In July of 1985, the Board of Faculty Advisors introduced the Standards of Reciprocal Relations for the Greek System. Originating as a recommendation from the Ad Hoc Committee on Greek Life, the Reciprocal Standards took a positive approach to managing the Greek system, seeking to strike a conciliatory tone with fraternities and sororities. It offered to “provide specific guidance for the moral, social, and intellectual growth of fraternity and sorority members” (Wells, Hall, & Harris, 1985, p. 1). Arguing participation in Greek organizations promotes friendship, a focus for social activities, philanthropic endeavors, and development of intellectual vitality, among other benefits, the document concluded:

These are important ideals that are worthy of achievement, and St. Lawrence University hereby reaffirms the positive role that Greek organizations can have on the campus...as members of fraternities and sororities, students pursue these ideals, they will enrich their educational experiences. (Wells et al., 1985, p. 1)

The proposed standards advocated for stronger advisement from both national organizations and University administration; it established higher standards for scholarship, community service, and chapter house maintenance (Wells et al., 1985). Interestingly, it no longer permitted “open parties” where alcohol was served, but Greek houses could continue to do so if the event was invite-only (Wells et al., 1985). This document offered no proposed changes to Greek Rush. The Standards of Reciprocal Relations for the Greek System were approved by the Board of Trustees in fall 1985.

At this same time, the faculty continued to work independently of administration on their concerns with Greek life. On November 11, 1985, Faculty Council formally appointed a Commission on Alternatives to the Greek System, also known as CAGS.

The commission was chaired by East College co-founder Parker Marden and charged as:

A fact-finding group which will study residential and social patterns at various colleges and offer advice to faculty. It is to observe colleges where there is satisfaction with fraternities and sororities as well as those where the “Greek System” has been replaced by other arrangements. (Marden et al., 1987, p. 1)

The presence of a faculty-led commission, in spite of the newly-adopted Reciprocal Standards, confused and angered some Board of Trustee members. This prompted Marden to write a letter clarifying the purpose of CAGS in spring 1986. He explained:

Strong faculty concern remains that the new standards affect life within the Greek system and it is important to consider the place of fraternities and sororities in the life of the larger University, especially in relationship to those academic issues, both within the classroom and beyond, for which the Faculty is primarily responsible (Marden, 1986, p. 2)

In reality, the true motivation behind CAGS was three-fold – a new President who had empowered the faculty, a deepening suspicion that Student Life was hiding bad behavior associated with Greeks from the greater campus community, and an emerging concern related to sexual assault in fraternities (Marden et al., 1987). In his letter to Trustees, Marden (1986) indicated the timeline for CAGS would allow for the Reciprocal Standards to have ample time to prove their effectiveness – or lack thereof – as a final report was not expected from CAGS until approximately April 1, 1987. In a bold move, the charge of CAGS explicitly stated, “it is expected that no vote on the status of the Greek System shall occur before fall term of 1987” (Marden et al., 1987, p. 1).

In spring 1986, an annual audit of the Greek system, as required by the Reciprocal Standards, was conducted. Hall, Harris, Howison, & Wells (1986) concluded:

[We] commend the fraternities and sororities for their cooperation during this period of transition in Greek life at St. Lawrence. The Committee believes that a foundation for positive growth has been established and it anticipates continued strong leadership from those who wish to build a first-class Greek System. (p. 7)

A “Senior Week Addendum” was later added to the audit, documenting an incident in which fraternity members from Sigma Chi and Sigma Pi damaged several residence halls, two theme cottages, several off-campus apartments, and two fraternities (Hall et al., 1986). Sigma Pi was moved from “conditional probation” to “critical probation,” while the Sigma Chi fraternity was suspended for an indefinite period of time.⁷

Alumni were beginning to express concern with the direction of campus discussions, as many of them were former Greeks. According to Cornwell, they were ‘listening to [faculty] and saying, ‘What the hell is going on up there?’” (personal

⁷ The suspension of Sigma Chi would last two years, with the fraternity being reinstated in fall 1988

communication). From 1984-89, Thacker spent his summers in the Adirondacks, at Canaras, because his partner ran the facility. During this time, he spoke to the guests, most of whom were alums. According to Thacker, “many of them were kind of outraged with what the administration was doing... there were people who thought St. Lawrence was just fine the way it was and, ‘Why are we even talking about this stuff, students are going be students’” (personal communication, September 3, 2016).

On April 1, 1987, the final report for CAGS was released. The commission’s work ultimately included visits to nine different coeducational, selective, residential liberal arts colleges in the Northeast and Midwest; they also conducted interviews and focus groups with faculty, staff, Greek students, and independents (Marden et al., 1987). Swartz recalled,

I was not a member of CAGS, but I was invited to go with the faculty on the trip to Maine. Bowdoin had a very active and influential Greek system. Colby had recently banned Greek houses from campus life, and Bates had never – in their entire history – had a Greek system. (personal communication)

CAGS reflected upon these findings, noting how student developmental needs “can be met in organizational and residential arrangements other than fraternities and sororities without adverse consequence to the social and emotional growth of undergraduates” (Marden et al., 1987, p. 8). However, CAGS ultimately chose to not recommend abolishing the Greek system at St. Lawrence. The final report provides a comprehensive list of 26 recommendations, challenging the Board of Trustees to “examine the University’s obligations to all St. Lawrence students, with a view to reducing the influence of the Greek system in decisions related to student life in direct proportion to the enhancement of opportunities for others” (Marden et al., 1987, p. 29). A need to

strengthen the overall St. Lawrence educational experience was also recognized, with recommendations including encouraging admissions to further diversify the student body, strengthening the academic quality of the sophomore year, creating new and diverse academic programs, and increasing participation in off-campus programs (Marden et al., 1987). CAGS challenged the Office of Student Services (i.e., student affairs) to “reorganize in such a way as to respond more fully to the needs of non-affiliated students” and identify ways to be more proactive in preventing – and educating students about – sexual assault (Marden et al., 1987, p. 30). CAGS endorsed the ongoing enforcement of the Reciprocal Relations agreement, but added additional recommendations; no new Greek organizations could be recognized or provided housing and, if a fraternity or sorority is suspended, the University provide no assistance of any kind to resurrect it (Marden et al., 1987). The final recommendation, number 26, requested that a Presidential commission be convened in five years to reexamine CAGS and abolish the Greek system at that time, if deemed appropriate.

The faculty members on CAGS attended a Thelmo meeting on October 21, 1987 to discuss the final report with students. It was a confrontational meeting, with many Thelmo Senators openly questioning the final report. According to the Thelomathesian Society Minutes (1987), one student stated “most campus leaders here are Greek” (p. 2) before encouraging the authors to address their own concerns; another student asked, “if the desire is to ‘level the playing field,’ why not bring up other student groups rather than bring down the Greek system?” (p. 2). During the next two Thelmo meetings, the student government voted to accept or reject each CAGS recommendation. After a final vote,

Thelmo chose to reject Recommendations 1, 9, 10, 22, and 24 (Thelomathesian Society Minutes, 1987). For the final CAGS recommendation, 26, Thelmo explicitly amended to *vehemently* reject the proposal that stated:

We recommend that, in the Fall of 1992 [five years later], a Presidential commission be convened to reexamine the Greek system in light of the changes that may have resulted from these recommendations. We recommend that, unless this Commission finds the Greek system to be significantly less of a liability to the University, the system be abolished. (Marden et al., 1987, p. 31)

According to Johnson, CAGS was a “notorious failure” (personal communication). A change in the presidency at St. Lawrence would occur just a few months later, contributing to a delay in many of the CAGS recommendations. However, the controversial final recommendation would ultimately be approved by the faculty and the new President in 1988 – with the formation of the aptly-named REC 26 Committee five years later. REC 26 would prove to have a profound impact on Greek life.

5.2.12. The Committee on Residential Life

On April 14, 1986, the Committee on Residential Life released their final report. The committee, chaired by Parker Marden, reaffirmed the importance of building a community of learners, articulating how learning “is a participatory process, not a passive act....it takes place throughout the community” (Marden et al., 1986, p. 1). Marden et al. (1986) identified five obligations, as outlined in Table 13, to ensure this commitment would be realized at St Lawrence.

The Committee on Residential Life challenged both faculty and students to embrace their respective responsibilities of being part of a residential college environment. Faculty were asked to recognize how their role extends beyond the confines

of the classroom and curriculum (Marden et al., 1986). Students were asked to realize the commitment they must make to their own education – through learning, reflecting, and growing – and also recognize their responsibilities include offering these same rights to others (Marden et al., 1986). The committee was far less complimentary to the Division of Student Affairs. Marden et al. (1986) described the Office of Student Activities as providing “distressingly feeble” (p. 7) programming and the Orientation program as

Table 13: Obligations Identified by Committee on Residential Life

No.	Description
Obligation 1	“A proper physical environment...safe, clean, and comfortable accommodations to all students who seek them” (p. 3).
Obligation 2	“An environment that directly supports academics...involves both physical space and a supportive atmosphere, indeed even a supportive culture” (p. 3).
Obligation 3	“Supportive counseling services...residential arrangements must be organized to recognize that students have developmental needs as well as academic commitments” (p. 3).
Obligation 4	“An environment that fosters individual and community concerns and encourages diversity...must be developed in which students accept the appropriate balances to be struck between the interest of the majority and the rights of the minority...Similarly, respect for diversity needs to be articulated and strengthened throughout the University” (p. 4).
Obligation 5	“An environment that advances the educational ambitions of the University” (p. 5).

failing to encourage intellectual curiosity. It was also identified that the Office of Student Services did not have adequate resources to support residential programming. A supplementary report by the Committee on Residential Life, specifically focusing on

Orientation, Resident Assistants, and Head Residents, was issued on November 21, 1986, providing specific recommendations on how to strengthen both areas of student affairs (Marden et al., 1986).

5.3 Research Question 2: Reasons for a Residential College Model

In this section, I will provide a detailed description of the cultural conditions and events associated with the actual adoption process of the new academic curriculum at St. Lawrence University, which occurred between summer 1985 and fall 1986. First, I will share insight from interview participants on why a residential college model was chosen for this program. I will then explore the campus events associated with the creation and adoption of the proposal that ultimately came to be known as the FYP.

5.3.1. Reasons for a Residential Model

When Thacker arrived at St. Lawrence in 1983, “it was clear that we were heading in the direction of some sort of required general education for the entire first year,” with the key reason being “dissatisfaction on the part of the faculty at the academic focus of the students we had at the that time” (personal communication). As Swartz explained:

I always felt that this was a perfect storm. That all these committees were sort of bubbling and brewing over this span of years with discontent. In my opinion, once this bubbling and brewing mass became a coalition, it became a movement...of the people who wanted St. Lawrence to change and improve. [They] now saw a way to combine and achieve their goals. And that movement, that coalition became the first year program. (Swartz, personal communication)

As these different faculty groups across campus began to coalesce, the residential college model became a pedagogical area of common ground that would enable faculty to address higher-level structural issues they perceived on campus, as Johnson explained:

The goals were to heal the divide between social life and academic life, and we thought that required time to create some kind of closer relationship between faculty and students....The residential college was the best model we had to bridge the divide between social life and academic life. (personal communication)

Cornwell further clarified:

I think the FYP designed as a living/learning program was really meant to be an intervention in student culture to try to engage first year students more directly with the mission of the college and raise the level of academic seriousness of purpose at the college. I think that it did that. (personal communication)

President Gulick agreed with this assessment, recalling:

My own experience as a teacher was that students can teach each other and they do learn a lot from one another. Wouldn't it be a good idea if students who took a single course lived together? That was the initial idea...that all the kids in course "X" could live in close proximity to one another, and would have closer than typical relationships to the faculty who were teaching that course. (personal communication)

Jockel shared insight into why a residential college structure was chosen for East College, and why such a model would work at St. Lawrence, with its distinct campus setting and particular cultural conditions:

I had always been under the influence of Al Splete's notion of the distinctive college that he had gotten from the broader literature of the period. As a student...he had involved me in the planning group for the 1970-71 master plan for the University....I certainly soaked up a lot of the notion of the distinctive college and bought into it, and Parker even more so....We strongly felt that the residential character of St. Lawrence and its relationship to the region and to Canton were the critical elements of the distinctive college... St. Lawrence wasn't at its potential; you have this tremendous college campus in the middle of the woods with dedicated, friendly faculty members that were still living in two different worlds. (Jockel, personal communication)

Some faculty, however, viewed the program as a maneuver to eliminate the Greek system. Budd shared the following perspective on the faculty responsible for the residential college movement:

[They] started attacking and [wanted to] do away with the Greek system, which they labeled as anti-intellectual, anti-academic...I had several KDS women in class, they would invite me to their functions and they made me a little brother. They gave me a pin with "I Love KDS" superimposed on a heart symbol...I'd wear it to the faculty meetings as they were trying to bash the Greeks....It was unfortunate. (personal communication)

Budd was correct in his assessment. Many faculty did view first-year residential colleges as an alternative to fraternity and sorority life, with the goal being to foster a change in student culture, as Stoddard explained:

The idea [was] to foster an alternative to the Greek system, recognizing that the Greek system provided a sense of belonging to students, and there was a way to do it that was more intellectually-based than that. Hopefully if students were taking a class together then you could give them collaborative projects to do in the dorm and they would talk about what they were learning in the class and foster a different kind of student culture. (personal communication)

5.3.2. The Summer Study Group

In 1985, the Academic Affairs Committee recommended the formation of a summer study group (SSG) to develop a new academic curriculum. The final product of this group would prove to be a coalition of ideas from faculty involved in the East College experiment, as well as the BASK program and the Committee on the Academic Environment. The SSG was commissioned by Faculty Council in May 1985, with a final report summarizing the summer study group's findings released on October 16, 1985.

The SSG explicitly stated it did not begin deliberations with the assumption radical change was necessary, yet quickly realized:

Our present curriculum is palpably lacking in the structure essential to assure that all students attain to the basic skills knowledge and values which will enable them to prove equal to the challenge offered by the distinguished Laurentian, Owen D. Young: "Have you enlarged your knowledge of obligations and your capacity to perform?" (Rossie et al., 1985, p. 2)

The SSG created a new curriculum proposal focusing on “increasing the consistency and uniformity,” ultimately realizing structural changes were needed to achieve the goals faculty desired (Rossie et al., 1985). First, the SSG proposed dropping the 4-1-4 academic calendar in favor of a traditional 2-semester calendar with no winter-term. However, the game-changing recommendation of SSG proved to be the strong endorsement for a common, general education course for all incoming first-year students – and proposing this common course be integrated with an expanded version of the residential college system initiated by East College two years earlier.

The SSG labeled their proposed residential college system the “Freshman Program” and envisioned it being two separate courses, one taught in the fall and the other in the spring. The group explained:

Requiring entering students to spend part of their freshman year taking team-taught, thematically-defined interdisciplinary courses which will provide an intellectual context – a kind of map for learning – for their subsequent studies at St. Lawrence...[and] gaining practice in mastering through reasoning, writing, and speech. (Rossie et al., 1985, p. 13)

Rossie et al. (1985) noted that incorporating such a radical “Freshman Program” into the curriculum would “enhance markedly the rapport between faculty and students and, we believe, give St. Lawrence a distinctive curricular/residential system which would make it a University truly unique” (p. 3).

5.3.3. The 1986 Proposal for Calendar and Curriculum Change

Following a review of the SSG report by faculty in spring 1986, the Academic Affairs Committee distributed a formal proposal for calendar and curriculum change to all faculty and staff on August 20, 1986. Throughout the fall 1986 semester, faculty

debated the proposal. According to Johnson, “my recollection was the creation of the FYP was not that painful and while there were people who...were arguing against it, it didn’t nearly divide the University. There was some later date that bitterly divided the University” (personal communication, September 9, 2016). While St. Lawrence faculty (1986) meeting minutes do support this claim, in the October 28, 1986 meeting the possibility of the residential component being optional was debated, with the motion narrowly failing in a 45-51 vote. Furthermore, the English department had motivation to approve the new curriculum as “they must have had 18 people...and they were able to drop teaching composition so they all got out from under this thing they had to teach” (Larsen, personal communication, August 18, 2016). On December 9, 1986, the new calendar and curriculum proposal was passed (St. Lawrence Faculty, 1986). The outcome of the vote itself was a break from the traditional cultural norms of the faculty, whom Thacker described as “kind of like the Quakers” (personal communication, September 3, 2016). Jockel clarified:

The opponents were completely outraged and treated the FYP...as illegitimate for several years because their governance model was – you talk about everything until there is consensus and agreement, and unless everybody is signed-on you don’t approve. Well, we simply said, “No, we have the majority” and off we go. (personal communication)

On December 12, 1986, Dean Rembert released a memo to the campus community announcing:

In a series of seven meetings this fall, the St. Lawrence faculty has completed its present work on curriculum and calendar reform. The specific resolutions, each one approved by a large majority, are listed below. In essence, the faculty adopted a new Freshman Program...These faculty resolutions raise various implementation questions...We basically hope to offer a pilot version of the

Freshman Program as an elective in 1987-88, and move to full implementation for all entering students in Fall 1988. (p. 1)

A list of eight specific resolutions followed, detailing how this initiative would be a “two-semester, multi-disciplinary freshman program which will have the purpose of promoting a habit of active intellectual inquiry among first year students and introducing them to significant human questions;” another fundamental component was “the freshman program [would] be taught within the residential college system” (Rembert, 1986, p. 2).

5.4. Research Question 3: Implementation and Initial Development of FYP

In this section, I will provide a detailed description of the cultural conditions and campus events during the beginning years of the FYP’s existence. First, I will share insight from interview participants illuminating the cultural factors associated with the implementation efforts. I will then explore the specific campus events associated with the implementation and development of the FYP, from its pilot year in 1987-88 until the summer of 1996. Of note is section 5.4.7, discussing the spring 1992 debate over the continued existence of the program. In this section, I will discuss the cultural implications of the heated faculty discussions over the future of this program – and the academic future of St. Lawrence.

While the residential college initiative was called “The Freshman Program” by the faculty at St. Lawrence until approximately 1990-91, from this point forward I will refer to it as the First-Year Program (FYP), unless citing a direct quote from an interview participant or primary source document.

5.4.1. Implementation Efforts and “The Great Land Grab”

Following the approval of the new academic calendar and curriculum, Dean Rembert quickly organized an Ad Hoc Committee on Implementation of the Freshman Program. Larsen, who served on the implementation committee, reached out to Bill Crimmel, inviting the well-respected Professor to one of the planning meetings:

I thought Bill Crimmel would be perfect for the FYP because this is how he teaches. He teaches a Socratic method. J.J. [Jockel] has said that Crimmel was the best teacher he ever had at St. Lawrence. And I so wanted him [to teach in the FYP]...He came, sat all morning for three hours, and we broke for lunch. He never came back. (Larsen, personal communication)

Dean Rembert approached Richard Guarasci and asked if he would like to be the Director of the FYP, “for whatever reason he turned to me, maybe because I wasn’t...involved in all that [debate], but I was involved in the [experimental] residential colleges” (Guarasci, personal communication, October 18, 2016). Guarasci agreed to lead the new program. The implementation committee worked throughout the spring 1987 semester to organize the pilot effort that would launch just months later. On March 30, 1987, Dean Rembert issued a progress memo, announcing the creation of a “University Programs” division. As Rembert (1987) explained, this division would enable the FYP to define resources, enlist faculty, evaluate faculty work, and promote professional development, “not unlike the present activities of academic departments” (p. 1). This division served another purpose, as Guarasci explained, “Reforms get annihilated by departments over time, so [Rembert] thought it needed some protection.” The memo also announced Richard Guarasci as the Director of the Freshman Program, explaining “he will do for divisional faculty what a department chair does for members of a department” (Rembert, 1987, p. 2).

One month later, on April 17, 1987, the Ad Hoc Committee on Implementation of the Freshman Program issued their final report. The committee reaffirmed the timeline originally proposed by faculty, and the pilot program was officially confirmed to start in 1987-1988. According to Rembert et al. (1987), interest was strong and “faculty response exceeded our hopes” (p. 3), with over 30 tenured faculty expressing interest in the twelve open teaching positions available. The remainder of the final report focused specifically on other logistical challenges and faculty-related concerns, including how staffing for this new program would be balanced against the higher-level course demands of other academic departments on campus.

Once the new direction of the curriculum had been established, it was time for faculty to address the residential needs of the FYP. In their final report, Rembert et al. (1987) described the ideal residential environment for the program as one that would “combine student living space, an appropriate common space, at least one classroom and...some office space for masters and teachers in each college” (p. 2-3). Fortunately, buildings fitting this description already existed on campus. The former Greek house used by East College during the previous four years was a natural choice for one residential college. Guarasci then reached out to two fraternities, Phi Kappa Sigma and Sigma Chi, and convinced the leadership of each organization to relinquish their chapter houses and relocate to smaller houses owned by the University. This deal is remembered as “The Great Land Grab.” These two buildings, located on the west side of campus on Maple Street, were identical in layout to East College – having also been constructed by the University following the 1965 report on Greek housing. While the “Land Grab”

provided the residential learning communities with ideal buildings for the pilot year, it did little to quell concerns from Greeks who felt their system was under attack. On March 31, 1987, President Gulick issued a memo to the campus reassuring students the University “has neither plan nor intent to ‘convert’ fraternity or sorority houses that it owns into ‘residential colleges’” (p. 1).

5.4.2. A Summer of Change

On May 11, 1987, the Division of Student Affairs responded. In a memo sent to faculty and staff, Dean Howison announced a significant restructuring of student services. This new structure is outlined in Appendix D. The changes reflected the efforts of a year-long seminar series involving the entire division. According to Howison (1987), a new development model for students would also be adopted, with the primary goal being “to design a program based on current student development theory that would integrate the individual development of students with the academic goals of St. Lawrence” (p. 1). Student affairs also proposed the establishment of a grant-funded Student Leadership Development Program intended to serve as a compliment to the new “Freshman Residential College Program” (Howison, 1987, p. 3). Another key change involved the appointment of Ginny Swartz to Director of Student Development. In this new role, Swartz would be responsible for the offices of Residential Life and Student Activities, while also overseeing the implementation of the new student development model and leadership program. This was a wise move on the part of Howison, as Swartz “loved the FYP...[and] thought it was the best thing to happen at SLU, perhaps ever” (personal communication). She would soon be approached by faculty to serve as the

student affairs liaison to the program, an opportunity Howison fully supported as he “liked the FYP initiative” (Swartz, personal communication). In July 1987, an additional document titled *Goals and Issues for Student Affairs* was released. Howison (1987) identified several objectives, including implementing the student development model, promoting career planning, establishing a tripartite committee to assess the needs of minority students, and facilitating “a positive debate” (p. 1) on the recently-released – and highly controversial – Commission on Alternatives to the Greek System (CAGS).

At the May 1987 Board of Trustees Meeting, Kelley Ross '88 spoke on behalf of students in her role as Student Delegate to the Board:

We have survived the first stage of this transitional period, and rest assured, we are still quite attached to St. Lawrence...I do not believe that the students feel the previous changes made at St. Lawrence were counterproductive; on the contrary, I believe that most students regard them as beneficial, enhancing campus life. However,...the general consensus is that they believe the students' voice has minimal impact on the issues that primarily affect students. (p. 1)

In regard to Greek life, Ross (1987) explained, “Greeks in particular view the CAGS report as a threat...one student asked me, ‘When are they (with reference to the faculty and administration) going to be satisfied?’” (p. 1). Ross (1987) closed by stating students “want to know that their voices are listened to and do have an impact on decisions...perhaps the reason why there is so much frustration is because it is always the faculty or the administration telling the students to change something. Think of what might happen if it was actually a student endorsing these changes” (p. 1-2).

Lawry Gulick departed as President of St. Lawrence University in the summer of 1987. Gulick reflected, “I think some people were pretty happy to see me go, but as my better friends say, ‘Yeah, you know the longer you’re gone, the better you look’”

(personal communication, October 13, 2016). Jockel supported this perception, stating “he would have been a very good president if he had stayed on much longer. He wanted to shake things up and he wanted change” (personal communication). Succeeding him would be Patti McGill Peterson, the institution’s first female president. Peterson came from Wells College, a women’s college and, according to Larsen, “didn’t know what she was getting into here” (personal communication). Lehr clarified,

There was a great deal of distrust in her, much of which I frankly think was legitimate, but I also think the fact she was a woman meant that it was kind of heightened and gendered in a way that was offensive. (personal communication)

For example, when speaking to a faculty member shortly after the hiring of President Peterson, Larsen recalled, “I said, ‘We have a new president.’ ‘Oh, who is he?’ And I said, ‘It’s not a he, it’s a she.’ ‘Oh dear, then we will have to paint the office pink.’” At her first meeting with Thelmo on September 30, 1987, Peterson stated she wanted to make St. Lawrence “a more cosmopolitan, more international university” (Thelomathesian Society Minutes, 1987, p. 1). This vision was clarified in a faculty meeting on November 1, 1988, when Peterson pushed for St. Lawrence to become a more environmentally conscious institution, have a sharper focus on Affirmative Action, and enhancing study abroad efforts (St. Lawrence Faculty, 1988). Many view her tenure as unsuccessful, as explained by Jockel, “I think the university...made a terrible mistake from the Peterson years and never recovered. When they abandoned [the distinctive college concept]...and turned into a cookie cutter liberal arts institution” (personal communication). Budd shared a similar sentiment, “A lot of people, especially in the faculty, were actually glad that we finally broke that part of the glass ceiling...[but] at the

end of her ten years, it was basically thought of as the dark ages” (personal communication). President Peterson would, however, prove to be a supporter of the FYP.

That same summer, the faculty selected to teach in the FYP pilot met at Canaras, St. Lawrence’s Adirondack retreat located on Saranac Lake, and formulated the final details of the program. The faculty spent “four or five monsoon-like days in that shelter trying to bang out what these courses were going to look like, what was going to be the enduring question” (Guarasci, personal communication). According to Guarasci, he also required all faculty to read Ernest Boyer’s book, *College*, along with work by John Dewey and articles on student cultures. In addition to creating a formative program and learn more about student cultures, another goal was to “organize the governing of this program in a way that was a much more participatory, responsible, and accountable form of faculty governance” (Guarasci, personal communication). As Guarasci would recall years later in a *The Chronicle of Higher Education* article:

We had no common discourse. There were times when we thought, ‘This is not going to work.’ We made a decision: The course content would be shaped by those in the program. We were living what we were asking students to do. (from Mooney, 1992, p. A14)

According to Mooney (1992), eventually the theme of “identity” became the connecting glue to the course. The key guidelines for the FYP called for a two semester, multi-disciplinary course, introducing significant human questions, race, class and gender.

Larsen stated, “That was the first time the trilogy – race, class and gender – were triumphant on campus. And that was very difficult for faculty, older male faculty, to deal with...they really were not happy” (personal communication).

As Guarasci explained, these efforts were taking place during the Regan-era 1980's at "a time when conservative scholars such as Bill Bennett and Lynne Cheney" (personal communication) were coming to prominence. Academic "culture wars" started at many campuses across the country. As Johnson explained, the culture wars were "basically a struggle between post-modernists and traditionalists over the content and mission of academia. Post-modernists are the advocates of relativism...and a mission of education as devoted to race, class, and gender...but the primary agenda is social justice" (personal communication, September 9, 2016). Johnson further clarified:

Guarasci very much came down on the side of the content of FYP should be race, class and gender, world culture; I mean, our vision initially [when voting for the curriculum change] was...based on the Western model that most of us had gotten as undergraduates....and, you know, that now even looks dated to me, but on the other hand it was familiar. Part of the controversy that it kicked up was that Guarasci kind of just abandoned that. (personal communication, September 9, 2016)

Another concern stemmed from the fact the common curriculum, with its emphasis on a social science paradigm and communication skills, created a sense of discomfort for some faculty. This was particularly true for the sciences. As Richard Perry, Professor of Anthropology who has conducted extensive research on non-Western cultures and race, explained, "Since faculty participating in the FYP came from an array of different departments, and beyond, this meant many of the FYP faculty – a vast majority – would be teaching subjects within which they had no more expertise than the average well-educated person on the street" (personal communication). With its thematic shift to identity, race, class, and gender, the FYP was becoming a highly controversial centerpiece of St. Lawrence's new academic curriculum.

5.4.3. The Pilot Year, 1987 - 1988

The first year of the FYP included three residential colleges of 50 students each, with four faculty team-teaching within each college. Students self-selected into the pilot year, with approximately one third of the incoming Class of 1991 participating in the program. Cornwell explained, “It was kind of Dewey-inspired social engineering, a holistic and comprehensive educational philosophy” (personal communication). Each residential college was named after a prominent faculty member from St. Lawrence’s past – Gaines College, Priest College, and Reiff College. A roster of the pilot year is included in Appendix E. Each residential college would have one faculty member serving as a “College Master,” with Richard Guarasci, Grant Cornwell, and Joseph Kling being the first selected. This structure was intentional:

I picked twelve people with the notion that we would have, after the pilot year, that many more colleges....If there were twelve colleges [after full implementation], we would have each one of these be a chair of each of the colleges and the chair would be the person who was responsible for meeting the mission goals of the program in that residential college. (Guarasci, personal communication)

Cornwell shared a story illustrating how challenging – yet potentially rewarding – this new program would prove to be, particularly in relation to the dynamic of team-teaching:

I had the first meeting [with the 4-person team] in my home...and Pat Alden and [another individual] had such a vicious fight that it fell apart. Pat said, “I can’t work with him” and he said, “I can’t work with her.” [He] was reassigned and I went and recruited Steve Papson...I’ve been fast friends with all four of them ever since. (personal communication)

The pilot was a learning experience for the faculty in a multitude of ways. According to Thacker, its purpose was to “make all the mistakes and figure it all out...[but] short of implosion, the pilot would lead to full implementation” (personal communication). The

faculty quickly discovered they “didn’t really understand student life at all,” according to Guarasci, and were particularly surprised by how “the autobiographies of these students were fraught with all kinds of psychosocial identify issues and anxiety and depression” (personal communication). Stoddard shared one particularly difficult situation that occurred in her pilot college:

A female student...was raped by a male at the very beginning of the semester and I felt it became evident within the community....I don’t remember exactly how I found out about this, but we all found out about this rape....I went around to every administrator I could go to. [They all said]... “Gee, I’m really sorry but you know there is really nothing we can do.” (personal communication)

This incident proved to be far from an isolated case, as demonstrated by a 1988 study conducted by junior faculty member. According to St. Lawrence faculty (1989) meeting minutes, this faculty-led study, titled “The Best Kept Secret,” indicated 57% of female students at St. Lawrence had “experienced forms of sexual harassment such as inappropriate touching or caressing” (p. 5), while 15% reported being raped. Stoddard recalled, “The higher administration at St. Lawrence was not happy about that” (personal communication). A few years later, the faculty member who conducted this study was denied tenure by President Peterson, despite being unanimously recommended 7-0 for promotion by the Professional Standards Committee on two separate occasions (St. Lawrence Faculty, 1992). Later that year, in remarks to the Board of Trustees, Professor Michael Sheard (1992) stated:

Among our junior colleagues, the most common reaction is fear....Sadly, this effect has been most pronounced among our young women faculty. Many of them saw Dr. Polakoff’s case as a test of whether an outspoken young woman who has ruffled some feathers over the years could survive the tenure process. They believe they now have their answer. (p. 2)

I share this story due to the fact this experience teaching in the FYP would play an integral role in Stoddard taking steps with other faculty to positively shape the University's response to incidents of sexual assault.

Despite these unexpected revelations, the FYP worked where it counted most, in building a sense of community among incoming first-year students. As Thacker explained:

Almost from the beginning, and by the beginning I mean almost the *very* beginning, anybody involved in it could see that this was better than what we had had before....one of the things I noticed almost immediately was that you didn't have the same relationship with FYP kids that you had with your other classes. (personal communication, September 3, 2016)

This assessment is supported by Swartz, who clarified what many first-year students not involved in the program were thinking:

Faculty started hearing from students who were not in the FYP. Statements like, "I wanted to sign up for the FYP, but I was afraid that I would be seen as a geek." And eventually it became clear to lots of people that if this was going to work, it had to be the entire freshman class and the course needed to be a graduation requirement. (personal communication)

FYP opponent Budd also acknowledged, "The students really liked the residency component because they got to know each other really well. Which is the same thing that happens in a Greek residency" (personal communication).

Throughout the first year of the program, the FYP faculty made efforts to communicate what was happening in the pilot. Guarasci explained, "My job was to sort of show them that learning went beyond the borders of the classroom and that we all had to own that in some significant way" (personal communication, October 18, 2016).

Additionally, Larsen wrote monthly newsletters in an effort to accurately inform other

librarians and staff at the library about the FYP. According to White, the student affairs staff initially “thought it was a great program...and [they] wanted it to thrive” (personal communication).

5.4.4. The FYP Expands

In the 1988-1989 academic year, the FYP expanded into a mandatory program for all incoming first-year students. It now encompassed twelve residential colleges of 45 students each, team-taught by three faculty members. This required Guarasci to find at least 36 faculty for the program, which he was able to do. The fall semester course was titled “The Human Condition: Nature, Self, and Society and took “an interdisciplinary approach to a series of enduring human issues that build student appreciation for the liberal arts as an approach to the human condition” (Guarasci, 1988, p. 1). The program also shifted from the non-departmental course title of “ND 187” to the recognized “FRPG 187-188.”

It was at this time the faculty in the program really started to form a bond and a shared identity. As Larsen explained, “Rick was wonderful....every two weeks there was a meal, all the faculty, and all the chairs of the colleges, and people from student life and...visitors...and Rick would have bagels and pizza brought in” (personal communication). Stoddard concurred, describing Guarasci and Cornwell as “really fun, collaborative people who would just like to get everyone together and laugh a lot” (personal communication). Guarasci had always envisioned the program as being a “pedagogical school” teaching new faculty how “to become an effective teacher” (personal communication). Thacker concurred, explaining, “You could feel it, once we

had a year of full implementation...it was something that was changing the place” (personal communication). Stoddard spoke to how many faculty found team teaching to be “intellectually stimulating,” and also shared, “Honestly, I didn’t get a lot of validation in the English Department, which is perhaps why I didn’t end up spending much time there. But, you know, I did in the FYP. It was exciting” (personal communication).

As the FYP continued to expand, so too did Guarasci’s role on campus. In fall 1989, he released a document titled *Planning Our Future*. He explained how President Peterson was “alienating even her friends in the faculty,” so he tried to fill the leadership void and “chart a course for where we needed to go” (personal communication). It was an ambitious statement, with Guarasci (1989) lamenting the recent shift towards a “business culture” within higher education and claiming “many institutions have lost touch with their missions...[while] more often decisions are a result of turf battles over resource allocation and personnel allotments” (p. 1). Gurasci (1989) would go on to explicitly state, “Be clear on one point. Our work is about enhancing our student as learners, persons, and citizens” (p. 9). He then proceeded to make an impassioned argument for transformative educational programs like the FYP and other emerging interdisciplinary programs such as African, Asian, and Gender Studies – highlighting the critical need for faculty to push for change and dedicate resources to such efforts, even in the face of limited fiscal constraints. The document also called for the planning of an Institute for Teaching and Learning, so St. Lawrence faculty could begin to cultivate a culture supportive of professional development that promoted enhanced teaching and experimental education. Gurasci concluded by stating:

St. Lawrence stands at a crossroads. It must decide whether it wishes to have “two universities” or one. Does it wish to extend The Freshman Program and all it represents as a curricular renaissance, as a revolution in student life, as a renewal of commitment to teaching, as a more participatory workplace?

Planning Our Future invoked a strong response that would reveal deep-rooted cultural differences among faculty. Philip Larson, a faculty member who had also served on the Ad Hoc Committee for Implementation of the Freshman Program, wrote a blistering sixteen page rebuttal. Among other critiques, Larson (1989) would question the “social sciences paradigm” (p. 1) of the FYP, while arguing non-Western cultural diversity was being “imposed upon” (p. 3) the University. The Guarasci-Larson debate would prove to be prophetic, as a culture war was looming – and the FYP was poised to become the symbolic lighting rod of this intense debate.

5.4.5. The Departure of Howison

In the spring of 1990, after 22 years of service to the University, David Howison resigned as Dean of Student Affairs at St. Lawrence. He left the institution to become Dean of Students at Washington & Lee University in Lexington, Virginia – a position he would serve in for thirteen additional years until his retirement in 2003. His resignation proved to be a crippling blow to student affairs. While some faculty considered Howison’s tenure to essentially be a continuation of lassie faire policies when it came to the Greek system, Swartz contended:

I think it was a bit more nuanced. [We] tried a variety of disciplinary responses: policy changes and regulations, warnings, disciplinary actions, sanctions, probation....But the Greek houses often found ways around the sanctions. No parties? So houses would hold parties off-campus where they were not as visible. No pledge class? So houses would take “ghost pledges” and try to operate in secret. In fact, it seemed that many of the Greek houses were resistant to change

at best, and more typically hostile to any rules or policies that might require them to change. (personal communication)

St. Lawrence would not experience consistent or trusted leadership within student affairs again until 2006, as they would proceed to cycle through a series of different Senior Student Affairs Officers over the course of the next sixteen years.

Immediately following Howison's departure, St. Lawrence chose to appoint a faculty member, Economics Professor Peter FitzRandolph, as the next Dean of Student Affairs. He would serve in this position for three years. Like previous Deans, FitzRandolph held a reputation of being supportive to Greek Life and, according to Thacker, "it's not for nothing [he moved into this role]...he never set foot in the FYP" (personal communication, September 3, 2016). Despite a change in leadership, tensions between the FYP and student affairs on issues of supervision and control of the first-year student experience continued. Swartz recalled, "The tensions between Guaraci and FitzRandolph were pretty rough. Any incident, perhaps where the Greeks disrupted a college with a 3:00 a.m. kidnapping, would result in pretty uncomfortable and contentious confrontations" (personal communication). Other examples of contested ground included the orientation schedule, training of the residential staff, student conduct, room assignment management, and budgets. (Swartz, personal communication). A few years later, during the spring 1992 debates, faculty meeting minutes show FitzRandolph supporting measures against the FYP.

5.4.6. Assessment of the FYP

In February 1990, two and a half years after the founding of the FYP, Faculty Council unanimously voted to appoint an ad hoc committee to assess the program. Budd recalled:

I said look, if you're going to do this...fine, but at least do something smart. Build into it as part of the program a means to assess it....As a scientist you have to assess your experiments. You have to collect data...it can be subjective data or it can be objective data, probably a little of both would be best, but at least build some assessment into this program. (personal communication)

The committee was charged with considering “the degree to which the program has met its goals as well as the impact...[on] academic and residential tone, allocation of both personnel and financial resources, professional implications for participatory faculty, and university admissions” (Faculty Council, 1990, p. 70). This did not come as a surprise to faculty connected to the program, as “the FYP was always looked at under a microscope by people on this campus” (Larsen). Guarasci added, “They thought we were the Leninist Revolution or something.” The assessment committee included seven faculty members, including individuals associated with the program as well as faculty who did not teach in the program.

At approximately the same time, two separate external reviews were performed on the FYP. One review conducted by Margot Soven and Richard Larson focused on the communications component of the FYP and found the instruction and assignments among the various colleges to be rather uneven (Booth-Trudo et al., 1991). The second external review was conducted by Patrick Hill, who was the Provost at Evergreen State College, and focused on the academic and residential aspects of the program. Hill shared his findings with St. Lawrence in a final report dated March 3, 1991. In his introduction,

Hill (1991) shared that he “struggled” with writing the report, disclosing that “I am pained by the undeniable divisiveness of the FYP on the SLU campus” (p. 1). He also acknowledged that, despite the divisiveness, “there are few campuses in America where such a large percentage of the faculty is thinking about institutional priorities, self-critically debating the commitment to high-quality undergraduate education, and expressing willingness to participate in a demanding untraditional program” (Hill, 1991, p. 4). While the external review identified several functional areas of growth for the young program, it ultimately focused on the lack of clarity in the program’s goals, the divisiveness it had caused on campus, and the significant challenges related to its assessment. Most notably, Hill (1991) discussed the mixed feedback offered by students and in doing so identified a much larger cultural challenge for the program:

What FYP is attempting to do at SLU is both important and extremely ambitious. What it is taking on – though it is not apparent that many of the FYP faculty are aware of this – is far more than the role and impact of the Greeks at SLU. It is the power and intransigence of youth culture in America; and more specifically the solidly entrenched function of autonomous (read “adult free”) social life of college in the coming of age of young Americans. (p. 12).

The review encouraged faculty to clarify the goals and objectives of the program. Hill (1991) also recommended expanding the “resources and scope” (p. 29) of the program, specifically through a more comprehensive residential component as well as the creation of a sophomore-year follow-up program. Most importantly, the external review was explicit in stating “the suggested expansion need not be accompanied by greater divisiveness” (Hill, 1991, p. 29), and concluded by encouraging faculty adopt an inclusive and collegial approach to potential program revisions.

Later that same year, on December 12, 1991, the Faculty Council-appointed Ad Hoc Committee for Assessment of the First-Year Program (FYPAC) released its final report. In addition to discussing the two external reviews, the internal review also acknowledged the excellent reputation the program had developed across higher education in the five years since its creation. This included recognition at conferences hosted by the Association of American Colleges, the American Association of Higher Education, and the University of Chicago's Institute on Teaching and Learning (Booth-Trudo et al., 1991). The *Chronicle of Higher Education* had also highlighted the program as an innovative practice, while Ernest Boyer had called the FYP "one of the most well-defined and creative [programs] in the country" (from Booth-Trudo et al., 1991, p. 13). Most importantly, during the final six months of the internal review process, the FYPAC noted a total of 26 colleges and universities had reached out to St. Lawrence to learn more about the FYP, with several of those institutions asking Richard Guarasci to consult with them on setting up similar programs on their respective campuses (Booth-Trudo et al., 1991).

In their findings, Booth-Trudo et al. (1991) acknowledged the same divisiveness among faculty that Patrick Hill had identified, with emotions ranging "from passionate support to vehement opposition with a full spectrum of views in between" (p. 29). The FYPAC noted many students held strong feelings of opposition toward the class, yet enjoyed living together as it "helped them feel comfortable right away and it has raised their awareness of what membership in a community entails...[while] issues of difference, tolerance, responsibility have become matters for intellectual debate" (Booth-

Trudo et al., 1991, p. 29). Other findings identified by Booth-Trudo et al. (1991) included strengthened advising efforts and the unexpected role the FYP had played in promoting professional development among the faculty teaching in the program.

The FYPAC concluded their report by providing eleven recommendations. Proposal 1 and Proposal 11 would become the focus of discussion among faculty the following semester. As outlined in Table 14, Booth-Trudo et al. (1991) proposed:

Table 14: FYPAC Proposals for Action

No.	Description
Proposal 1	"The requirement for commonality in content among the FYP courses should be eliminated to allow for more thematic variety while still addressing the FYP goals" (p. 31).
Proposal 2	"The FYP faculty should continue efforts towards obtaining consistency in workload and grading standards among the various colleges" (p. 32).
Proposal 3	"The FYP Chairs Council (or a designated committee) should reexamine the goals of the FYP" (p. 32).
Proposal 4	"Pertinent information about the FYP...should be disseminated to all faculty on an annual basis. An annual faculty forum should be scheduled to allow all faculty to discuss issues related to the FYP" (p. 32).
Proposal 5	"The faculty's resolution...to allow first and second year students to have a second advisor in a discipline of their choice should be more aggressively implemented" (p. 33).
Proposal 6	"St. Lawrence should hire a tenure-track writing director to instruct and support the FYP faculty and encourage writing across the curriculum so that skills developed in the FYP will be sustained" (p. 33).
Proposal 7	"The University should make available a course or courses in remedial composition which could serve students who may need considerably more attention to writing needs than can be provided in the FYP" (p. 33).

Proposal 8	“The optimal size for each college should allow for flexibility in reassigning students” (p. 34).
Proposal 9	“The procedures for recruiting faculty to serve in the FYP should be regularized and made more open and visible” (p. 34).
Proposal 10	“Except in unusual circumstances, newly-hired faculty should not be assigned to teach in the FYP. Under no circumstances should more than one newly-hired faculty be assigned to the same college” (p. 34).
Proposal 11	“The structure of the second semester of the FYP should be modified” (p. 33).

5.4.7. The Spring 1992 Debate

Once initial assessment efforts of the FYP concluded, the stage was set for an intense debate on the continued existence of the controversial program. It commenced in the spring 1992 semester. In an unprecedented move, Thelmo also actively engaged in these discussions – with the students proving to be surprisingly ardent supporters of the FYP. Going into the semester, Guarasci realized he had become a controversial figure on campus, so he organized all current and former FYP Chairs together and told them, “Look, if you believe in this program you’re going to have to fight for it” (Guarasci, personal communication).

On February 13, 1992, Thelmo released a formal response to the FYPAC report. They strongly disagreed with Proposal 1 of the FYPAC report, urging faculty to keep the commonality between FYP courses. Thelmo rationalized this stance by stating the FYP should “expose new students to different ideas and disciplines” (Gabriel, 1992, p. 1), and that one of the program’s greatest strengths was how it united the first-year class. The students articulated how a loss of course commonality would potentially limit exposure to

new ideas, while the proposed “thematic variety would hinder this shared experience” (Gabriel, 1992, p. 2). For Proposal 11, Thelmo supported a change to the second semester, but recommended the same course of action also endorsed by the FYP Chair’s Council. This included seminars focusing on research skills, while continuing a structure of mandatory residential colleges (Gabriel, 1992). At the February 18, 1992 Faculty Meeting, the faculty went against the recommendation of Thelmo and elected to drop the course commonality within the FYP by a vote of 65-27-5 (St. Lawrence Faculty, 1992).

The FYP debate then shifted to Proposal 11, focusing on potential structural changes to the spring semester of the program. In another unprecedented move, the FYP Chair’s Council collaborated with Thelmo and two members of FYPAC to release a joint proposal for a modified second semester FYP structure. The student-endorsed proposal once again called for the second semester to continue being mandatory and residentially-based, with an academic focus on the research writing process which could be taught through seminars, tutorials, and/or field/lab work (Cornwell et al., 1992).

At the March 10, 1992 Faculty Meeting, this joint proposal was discussed with student representatives from Thelmo in attendance – yet during this meeting, Biology Professor Thomas Budd moved to have the FYP be abolished (St. Lawrence Faculty, 1992). The discussion of complete program elimination, or termination of the second semester, would dominate Faculty Meetings for the remainder of the semester. Multiple votes were cast, with several of them being very close. Lehr recalled, “We once had a vote that – [a faculty member] was the Chair of Faculty Council and he added wrong; and he was in Math! I think we actually still have the FYP because he added wrong”

(personal communication). Cornwell added, “There was a segment of just bitter, bitter opposition. Every time that they lost a vote they would become more embittered and they never went away” (personal communication).

Several open letters were written by faculty both for and against the program. Most notably, one open letter was penned by an independently-organized group of students who called themselves *Seniors Concerned with the Future of the First Year*. While this student group acknowledged that changes were needed to strengthen the program, they believed “the FYP serves a unique, valuable, and quite salable aspect of St. Lawrence...[that] is essential to this University’s immediate and distant future” (McWethy, Tarrant, & Brown, 1992, p. 1). These students, who were first-years in fall 1988 during the FYP’s first year of class-wide implementation, shared that they were able to obtain over 60 signatures in less than one hour supporting the continuation of the program. This included members from each of the 12 original FYP colleges.

Finally, at the April 14, 1992 Faculty Meeting, the debate on FYP was brought to a close. Sharia Gabriel ‘93, Thelmo’s Chair of Academic Affairs, was in attendance once again and was given the floor. She stated Thelmo believed it was very important to have a two-semester FYP and that students were willing to compromise with faculty to establish a strong year-long program (from St. Lawrence Faculty, 1992). Gabriel also shared “it was her hope that faculty could begin to regard each other with as much respect and concern as they accord students” (St. Lawrence Faculty, 1992, p. 2). Professor Joe Kling then moved to close debate on the FYP, with the motion passing 44-41-7. The First-Year Program survived.

5.4.8. Cultural Perspectives of the FYP Debates

In this section, I will outline the key arguments from both sides of the faculty debate over the FYP. Several key topics of contention surfaced in interviews with faculty and administrators. These included epistemological assumptions; political perspectives on race, class, gender, and social justice; departmentalism; and general internal politics.

The philosophical approach of the FYP was clearly articulated by Cornwell when he explained:

We believed in the power and salience of interdisciplinary, second of all we believed that a liberal education is a holistic undertaking that where the quality of life on campus is as relevant to the delivery of a mission as the quality of work in the classroom, and we also believed that students ought to be engaged with fundamental questions of value, which is to say you know that this was the beginning of discussions about in the first generation, the FYP committed every single college to having a curriculum which engaged certain text around race, around class and around gender. So race, class, and gender were the “watch words” of the day, and...we were trying to make it part of the fundamental St. Lawrence curriculum. (personal communication)

In her description of Bill Crimmel, Larsen illustrated a different epistemological paradigm by stating, “Bill is...a good Greek....I mean a Greek, like from Socrates. Sits under the tree and spews the knowledge from the big pitcher into a whole lot of little pitchers....He was a teacher and it all came this way. The students had nothing to tell” (personal communication). Kling shared a similar sentiment when describing the stance of an older faculty member whom he respected greatly:

He spoke rigorously, but in principled terms. He was a pedagogical conservative who believed there were certain truths, and that it was our job to teach these truths. He stood against the academic elements of the FYP on principle because we had a relativist notion of knowledge. Today, I would call it constructivist. (personal communication)

Perry, an early opponent of the program, offered a divergent perspective to the constructivist approach:

I recall one faculty meeting when a colleague arguing in favor of adopting the [FYP] reveled in the excitement of faculty “learning together” with the students. Sorry, but with the cost of attending private colleges, I believe students and their parents deserve more than that. (personal communication)

Budd was more direct, stating, “Trying to teach an integrative, critical-thinking FYP when they come in as a first year student, and they don’t have enough learning to do any of that yet, is doomed” (personal communication).

Despite strong differences in opinion, the faculty from this small, close-knit campus community appeared to recognize the genuine nature of the opposing viewpoints. As Thacker shared, “I always say, ‘don’t ever change my beloved St. Lawrence,’ and kind of sneer at that. But there were people who had been here for a long time and quite legitimately disagreed with the direction [the FYP] was taking the institution” (personal communication). Lehr offered a similar assessment, stating:

[They] argued that a program like Gender Studies was political and nothing else, because everything else was about truth.... I think in many cases what they were trying to hold onto was what they really believed academia should be. I think they really believed that the pursuit of truth was something that was what we did. This was a time period where the whole question of is there a single truth was kind of post-modernism, was intellectually developing and so I think that it was the vision that in a large part was about a curriculum that they didn’t want to see change. (personal communication)

Perhaps the strongest illustration of how challenging and complex this debate was for close colleagues was the relationship between Crimmel and Cornwell. The younger colleague shared, “I’m probably a philosopher because of Bill Crimmel,” before going on to explain:

I was in his department and we were on the opposite side of nearly everything. We would talk daily in our offices philosophically about these programs... him not supporting the FYP is one of the great ironies of his life, because actually it's aligned with everything he believes about liberal education... He was kind of an Allen Bloom conservative about the curriculum. So, I think he saw all of this as just entirely too fancy and entailing too much social engineering, but to this day I could not tell you or give you a cogent explanation of why Bill opposed it, because many of my ideas of why I was the champion of it came directly from my work with Bill Crimmel [when I was] a student. (personal communication)

Another key point of contention inseparable from the FYP debate were the culture wars occurring on campus at this same time. With race, class, and gender being integrated into the FYP common curriculum, strong opinions existed on both sides of this issue. Budd illustrated these strong emotions when he shared, "I used to wear my NRA life member hat...to the faculty meetings because I knew it bugged the crap out of a lot of the PC faculty who wanted a new social order" (personal communication). Kling offered a counter-argument when he explained:

They said we were indoctrinating the students to what's now called political correctness....what we were actually doing was bringing in all different kinds of ideas about learning. We were bringing in books from different cultures....we were changing the curriculum to a multicultural one and bringing kids together to learn new things and see the world in different ways. (personal communication)

Johnson, a Philosophy Professor who taught in the FYP for over a decade, demonstrated a deep understanding of both sides of this debate and reflected on the topic differently:

There is no question in my mind that the culture wars were the source of a lot of the resentment about the FYP. I mean, even I resented that the FYP went in the direction that it did. I'm wholly sympathetic with the idea – with the concern about inequality and injustice, and I recognize that a lot of that turns around race, class and gender, although it certainly can't be the case that those are the only arenas of injustice....I mean I'll just take an obvious example of just physics, astronomy, those are just not about race, class, gender, injustice or inequity; they're simply not. They may have some kind of bearing and I'm sure you can find connections, but those are worthy, important human enterprises and I think that the post-modernists saw race, class, gender, injustice and inequity as being

the organizing focus on our education and I disagreed and resented the degree to which the FYP got formed along what I saw as being that vision. (personal communication)

Departmentalism was discussed by almost every interview participant as another cultural factor in the fight to save the FYP. As Guarasci explained, “Power was moving away from academic departments to [the FYP]...this whole notion towards interdisciplinary was gaining great ground at the cost of departmental power” (personal communication).

Lehr concurred:

It was raising interdisciplinary in a way that was a challenge to departments...I think it was suggesting that knowledge...was more than departmentally-based and that there is something that you would do with first-year students that was more important, and I think there were people who resisted that. (personal communication)

Closely related to the issue of departmentalism was the argument that expertise was needed in a field of study. Johnson highlighted this concern by stating, “Faculty were being asked to do something that they weren’t prepared for...they were really disciplinary specialists. They were not equipped, and did not want to be equipped, to teach communications skills or the interdisciplinary ideas” (personal communication).

Thacker offered a similar assessment, stating:

You learn more and more, about less and less. So what you want to do is teach that less and less, and you don’t want to come in and teach stuff that you feel is far from your expertise. “Expertise” was a word used a lot. They were always talking about, “Did people have the expertise to do this?” (personal communication)

In response to this, Perry offered an interesting perspective as to why maintaining departments with highly-specialized faculty is important:

Many colleges and universities are no longer quite what they pretend to be: places where students will study under the guidance of faculty who’ve dedicated

their lives to developing a command of one or another complex discipline. Most faculty, I'm convinced, still do live up to this ideal, with deep personal commitment. But the "interchangeable employee" model, the idea that expertise in a subject is not necessarily a requirement for teaching it at the college level, deeply undermines this principle—and undermines the efforts of faculty who continue to observe it. The earliest manifestation of this at SLU, I believe, was the FYP. (personal communication)

Another factor that likely contributed to departmentalism is the fact instructors from the sciences were often working with different types of students than faculty in the social sciences and humanities. Jockel explained, "[The sciences] had better students, more dedicated students...they tended not to see some of the problems we saw, 'What do you mean student's aren't curious?'" (personal communication). Johnson agreed with this assessment, stating: "[In] the natural sciences and mathematics...there is an issue of measurable performance that students see as connected to their career goals...and so I think it's easier to perhaps get a certain amount of engagement" (personal communication).

There were also traditional university politics and power dynamics factoring into the FYP debate. Faculty who taught in the program were granted an additional 1-semester sabbatical every three years, while the program was also gaining notoriety. According to Larsen, "Faculty didn't like the idea that other faculty were getting more money. That was a very strong thing....the people outside, all they saw was...an [extra] sabbatical, getting more money, getting research funds, or being able to travel to conferences" (personal communication). Cornwell shared similar thoughts, explaining:

They saw that's where the action was, that's where the resources were going. They also...felt the cultural shift, there was backlash. Like, "wait a second, this thing is now larger than the FYP; this thing has actually sort of overflowed its vessel and is spilling out all over the place." So they resisted it like anybody

would resist cultural change and it was reactionary; it was just classically reactionary. (personal communication)

Echoing Cornwell's sentiment, while at the same time making a comparison to the 2016

U.S. presidential election, Guarasci shared:

I think people who...were not in the program...felt they were becoming irrelevant. Because all the goodies and perks, the leave with full pay, the publicity around the program, the promotion of the program by the administration to the new students, the reward structures, things weren't moving in that direction. They felt, I think, [like they were] being pushed to the sidelines....So, some people argue that this election...is the last stand of the Republican Party that essentially represents White people exclusively, right? ...Well, to some degree that's an analogy to [the FYP]...we were just a symbolic representation of the old St. Lawrence disappearing and a new one being born. (personal communication)

Another political point of resistance came from faculty who were sympathetic to Greek life and tried to represent those interests. As Jockel explained, "There were faculty members who saw this as a threat to the fraternity system which it was, we never made any bones about it" (personal communication).

5.4.9. A New First-Year Dean and Program Changes

The FYP was featured once again in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* in the June 3, 1992 issue. The article was titled, *At St. Lawrence U., a Controversial Course for Freshmen Seeks to Encourage a More Intellectual Campus Climate*, and discussed the recent vote to keep the program in place with modifications. While Guarasci was quoted in the article, he would leave St. Lawrence that summer to become the Vice President of Academic Affairs at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY. He would be succeeded by Grant Cornwell, who had worked closely with Guarasci ever since serving as a Faculty Chair in the 1987-88 pilot year. According to Guarasci, "my loving remarks

to Grant were privately, ‘Don’t screw this up’” (personal communication). Cornwell had a vision for the future direction of the program and, perhaps more importantly, the temperament to steer the program away from its contentious origins. Under his leadership, the program would experience its “philosophical Venus” (Cornwell, personal communication) as a fully-integrated program. Swartz concurred, sharing:

As much as I loved Rick, I think Grant saved the program...[he] wasn’t as political. He really likes to work collaboratively, to negotiate...his style seemed to reduce the tensions between the FYP and the Greeks....and he was even able to calm the tensions between student affairs and the FYP. (personal communication)

During the first five years of the program, the academic component reported to academic affairs, while the residential efforts had been the responsibility of student affairs. It was perceived, however, that student affairs thought of their role as “just to keep order and to provide for safety, security and counseling, basically” (Cornwell, personal communication, October 3, 2016). Contingent upon accepting the position, Cornwell insisted President Peterson restructure the FYP in a way that had dramatic implications for student affairs:

“I said if this is truly a program of integrated living and learning,...I’d like to be the Dean rather than the Director [of the FYP], and I think it’s important that the residential staff of the first-year students also report to me. (Cornwell, personal communication)

Cornwell’s request was granted and the new structure of the second generation of the FYP is illustrated in Figure 5. With Howison no longer at St. Lawrence, and FitzRandolph – a tenured faculty member – serving as Dean of Students at the time, there was little resistance to this change. Cornwell then recruited Ginny Swartz, a long-time student affairs staff member who supervised Residence Life and Student Activities at the

time, to become the newly-created Assistant Director of Student and Community Development – a position reporting directly to Cornwell in the FYP. Swartz explained, “This supervisory shift was very important because previously, there were tensions between the FYP and the VP for Student Affairs, and I often felt stuck between the two divisions” (personal communication). With this new structure, Cornwell explained, “the academic dimensions...and the residential dimensions of the FYP, and all of the advising and Orientation, was all one integrated program” (personal communication, October 3, 2016).

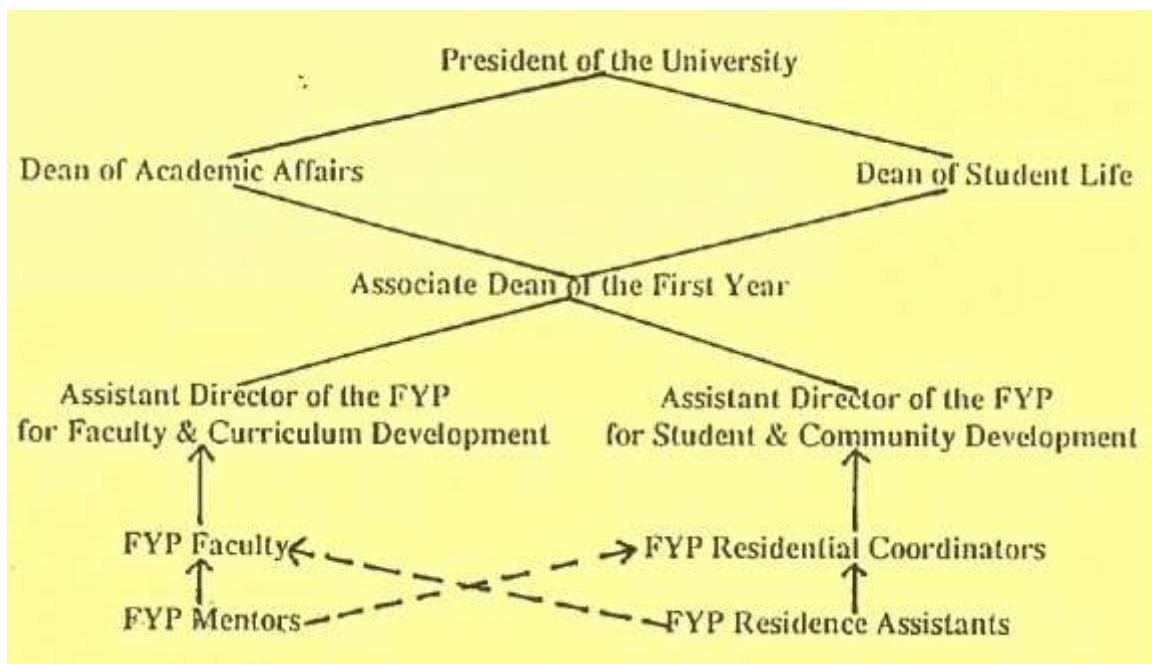


Figure 5: Organizational Chart, Second Generation of FYP

Despite the flow chart in Figure 5 indicating a shared reporting structure, in reality all areas of responsibility related to the student experience within the first year were stripped away from the Division of Student Affairs. Jockel recalled, “We

temporarily grabbed ahold of student affairs for the Freshman year, just pushed the Dean of Students out of it...[they] had no clue how to do this. All they want to do is run fraternities and dormitories” (personal communication, September 2, 2016). This split in administrative responsibilities that had traditionally been handled by student affairs was difficult for the division to accept, as White explained “that was a big clash back then because...Student Life folks thought, ‘Well, that’s not the way it should be; we should have a little collaboration here’....for a few years it was pretty tense” (personal communication). Evidence of this complete divorce between the FYP and student affairs was clear when Lehr, who served as Associate Dean of the FYP from 1997-2001, shared that collaboration between the two divisions was minimal throughout much of her tenure.

Following the external and internal reviews, and acting upon the feedback solicited in the spring 1992 faculty debates, the curriculum of the FYP also underwent fundamental change in 1992-93. Most notably, the common course content and readings were abandoned, with faculty teams now being permitted to design their own course theme and syllabus (Cornwell, 1992). Several faculty were saddened to see this change occur:

I was for one common course...I wanted to create intellectual commonality that would carry through four years where everybody can read certain books in common or certain ideas in common; that could become the base on which you taught other things and a common conversation for students and faculty and so on. (Johnson, personal communication)

However, this change was instrumental in easing the tensions between faculty, as many of them “wanted to teach with faculty who shared their interests, and design their own course” (Swartz, personal communication). It also addressed a key concern of

faculty who opposed the program that claimed a common curriculum prevented individuals from teaching in their area of expertise. As Guarasci explained, “we had to create a more pluralistic formula to allow difference into the program. We didn’t want to hogtie everybody to say that we’re all doing the exact same thing” (personal communication). In an effort to strengthen the residential aspect of the program, Cornwell (1992) announced the creation of a residential curriculum, “designed to engage students in discussions of community and difference” (p. 3), with the goal being to “help each college begin to develop into a community which is intellectually alive and socially responsible” (p. 3). According to Swartz, most of these adjustments were negotiated while Guarasci was still overseeing the program, “but I believe that Grant was instrumental in making this transition work” (personal communication).

5.4.10. “REC 26”

The year 1992 marked the five-year anniversary of the Commission on Alternatives to the Greek System (CAGS), which had originally released its final report back in 1987. In accordance with the 26th and final recommendation of that report, President Peterson appointed a faculty-led commission in December of 1992 to review the recommendations of CAGS. Chaired by Larsen, the commission was initially identified as “CAGS II,” but quickly changed its name to the *Recommendation 26 Committee* – or “REC 26,” for short – in recognition of their originating charge. The new commission was charged to “reexamine the Greek system using the recommendations of the CAGS Report as the foundation for the re-examination” (Larsen et al., 1993), and issued their final report to the President in June 1993. As noted by Larsen, “What’s very

interesting is, when a male is chair of a committee, they call it Guarasci's committee or Parker's committee....REC 26, that's my committee....But nothing was ever the 'Larsen committee.' I don't think I would have wanted it that way...but it's very interesting as I look back now.” (personal communication, August 18, 2016).

The findings of REC 26 confirmed that Greek organizations, particularly fraternities, continued to “hold a practical monopoly on party life at St. Lawrence” (Larsen et al., 1993, p. 16), yet at the same time “came across no evidence that the Greek organizations contribute to the cultural life of the University” (p. 20). This is demonstrated in Table 15, showing the number of approved Greek organization parties hosted in the fall semesters of 1991 and 1992. These figures reflect a new policy, enacted in 1992, limiting the number of Greek organization parties, to which the Dean of Students Office claimed had been “somewhat effective in reducing the number of parties, particularly those held on evenings from Sunday through Thursday” (FitzRandolph, 1993, p.1).

Table 15: Approved Greek Organization Parties, Fall 1991 vs. Fall 1992

Semester	Sun-Thurs	Fri, Sat	Total
Fall 1991	27	58	85
Fall 1992	12	53	65

Swartz clarified the reality of this chart, explaining how Greek organizations continued to host a similar number of parties despite University efforts to regulate social events. “Some fraternities would discover ways to circumvent the rules. For example, no weekday mixers? Okay, we will rent or use a bar downtown” (Swartz, personal

communication). It was clear to the REC 26 committee that moderate steps to regulate the Greek system would not have a noticeable impact on the academic tone at St.

Lawrence.

Table 16: REC 26 Committee Recommendations

No.	Description
Recommendation 1	"The University construct a new student center" (p. 22).
Recommendation 2	"Housing policies providing students with flexible housing options" (p. 22).
Recommendation 3	"The University contract with an independent business having its own monitoring system and alcohol liability coverage to cater Greek parties and other campus events involving alcohol" (p. 23).
Recommendation 4	"More formal methods of communicating views between Greek students and the administration be established. Steps should be taken to ensure that student involvement is guaranteed in the formation and implementation of policies affecting Greek life" (p. 23).
Recommendation 5	"We recommend that no first year student be allowed to rush or pledge. The Greek Presidents' Council, IFC, and Panhellenic Council should assume responsibility for devising new rules for rushing and pledging" (p. 24).
Recommendation 6	"The G.P.A. necessary for Greek eligibility be 2.5. The University should routinely gather statistics that will allow a comparison of the academic performance of Greek and independent students" (p. 25).
Recommendation 7	"Panhel and IFC, with University Support, initiate a review of all national regulations governing Greek activity on campus. Regulations found to be imputable with the St. Lawrence University environment should be challenged." (p. 26).
Recommendation 8	"No new Greek houses be recognized by the University" (p. 26).

Larsen et al. (1993) offered 8 recommendations, outlined in Table 16. Each received unanimous support by the committee, with the exception of Recommendation 5 and Recommendation 8. Not surprisingly, once the report was released, Recommendation 5 proved to be the most controversial among students, as well. Larsen et al. (1993) concluded their report by stating:

Notably absent from our recommendations is a suggestion that another committee be formed in five years to again review the Greek system. Nor do we recommend that the Greek houses be abolished. We believe that the structures that are in place can successfully oversee the fraternities and sororities and can provide guidance, support, and discipline as needed. (p 28)

Response to REC 26 by students was swift and strong. Swartz recalled, “the Greek system had a long history and tradition at SLU...lots of support. Remember, a high percentage of alumnae were Greek and they remembered their Greek years fondly” (personal communication). This characterization is supported by the fact 73% of all donors to the institution in 1991-92 had a Greek affiliation (Infantine, 1993).

The presidents of Interfraternity Council (IFC) and Panhellenic Council (Panhel) sent a joint letter to President Peterson on October 11, 1993 voicing their unanimous opposition to Recommendation 5, as they perceived the elimination of rushing and pledging from the first year as a policy that would eliminate a host of social opportunities for students (Yeagley & Finelli, 1993). This was followed shortly thereafter by formal responses from Panel on October 27 and Thelmo on October 29, both of whom strongly disagreed with Recommendation 5 (Panhellenic Council, 1993; Ellis & Clark, 1993). Jockel provided a concrete illustration of why this recommendation was originally included in CAGS and continued to persist in REC 26:

Rush was awful! It was nothing but pouring alcohol down kids' throats day after day after day. They were full of kegs and you'd try to conduct a class and the kids were showing up drunk in class...it was highly disruptive....Dining services finally said, "We don't want any more freshmen coming in...and throwing up and falling all over....[with these proposals] we knew they were safely out of their freshman year. (personal communication, September 2, 2016)

President Peterson issued her response to REC 26 on February 2, 1994. All recommendations were accepted, with the exception of Recommendation 5. Instead of approving a shift for all rushing and pledging to the sophomore year, Peterson (1994) determined "rushing will be shortened and occur as late as possible in the spring of the first year" (p. 3), with "shortened and approved pledging programs and all initiations" (p. 4) to be completed in the fall semester of the sophomore year. Within a few years, this policy would be updated and all Greek rush and pledging events would be completely shifted to the sophomore year. In addition to this, Recommendation 8 – no new Greek houses be recognized by the University – was approved at this time, and this policy would prove to be instrumental in making permanent changes to the Greek system in the coming years.

5.4.11. The Final Stand: Cultural Backlash from Alumni Council

Throughout the early 1990's, St. Lawrence faced a series of annual budget deficits. To address these fiscal challenges, a committee of faculty, staff, students, and trustees participated in a year-long planning process in 1992-93 resulting in the *Strategic Vision Statement*. The statement claimed to not outline specific programmatic additions or reductions, yet rather offered a framework within which financial decisions should be made with a focus on "quality, support of mission and centrality, value to society, and financial equilibrium" (Benedict, 1994, p. 1). Cost savings were ultimately found

through a series of measures, including one controversial decision that would have profound cultural implications – the elimination of the wrestling program.

The decision to cut the wrestling team was announced in October 1994 (Benedict, 1994, p. 2). The decision to eliminate this storied athletic program came as a shock to many within the Laurentian community, as the wrestling program had a long history of sustained success. The institution's most famous alumnus, Kirk Douglas '39, had been a very successful wrestler, while the 1988 team had won the NCAA Division III national championship just six years earlier (Saints Athletics, St. Lawrence University, n.d.).

Opposition to this decision was swift. Several alumni came forward, but in doing so they attacked not only the wrestling team decision, but also criticized recent changes to "their St. Lawrence." Once again, the FYP found itself under attack. One alumnus wrote President Peterson and threatened to withhold financial support, while also encouraging others to do the same unless corrective actions were taken to restore "the St. Lawrence way" (Hamlin, 1994 p. 2). Another alumnus spoke to the "good old days" by describing them as "a more balanced approach to the St. Lawrence Experience which, in my opinion is a combination of Academics, Athletics, Student Life, Social Functions, the Town of Canton, the University Employees, etc." (Christie, 1994, p. 1). However, many alumni also wrote expressing their support of the recent changes.

The First-Year Program soon responded. An open letter signed by eleven faculty who taught in the FYP was sent to the campus community. Then, in a letter dated December 1, 1994, Grant Cornwell wrote to the Board of Trustees and Executive Alumni Council defending the recent changes by stating:

Make no mistake. The direction of the University, especially over the past seven years, has been clear, compelling, and successfully focused. It is true that this direction has transformed and is transforming the character of St. Lawrence....when I hear our fellow Laurentians say that “St. Lawrence is not as much fun as it used to be,”...I understand their nostalgia, but I find these ideas wholly untenable as a direction for our *alma mater*. (Cornwell, 1994, p. 1-2)

One week later, on December 10, 1994, a special session of the St. Lawrence University Executive Alumni Council was convened in Albany. The agenda included two key presenters – Grant Cornwell and President Peterson. Hand-written notes preserved from this closed meeting show Cornwell informed those present how St. Lawrence was changing by necessity and “what we have done, we have done responsibly and well” (Cornwell, 1994, p. 1). Cornwell (1994) then spoke to concerns of “political correctness,” arguing the term signifies “intolerance of views that fall outside of narrowly prescribed bounds” (p. 4), specifically as they relate to race, class, and gender, and that the FYP had avoided this by “enabling students to take those issues on substantively and critically so that in every case they consider every side of the issue” (p. 5). Several alumni wrote to Cornwell after this meeting expressing their gratitude and respect for his stance on the direction of the institution. Cornwell further clarified:

The St. Lawrence they knew and loved was a place where it was about athletics, fraternities and sororities, and you got your academics but it wasn't the most important thing happening. But that's old news...had we not changed course, we would not have the St. Lawrence we have today; there is just no question about that....If we were going to be a competitive place it meant being academically serious because that's the only value that we have. You know, these degrees have to mean something and students have to be seriously engaged in them. So, I think that the faculty, myself included, were also very concerned about the future for St. Lawrence. (personal communication)

On January 27, 1995, less than two months after the Alumni Council meeting in Albany, Patti McGill Peterson announced her resignation as President of St. Lawrence

University (Peterson, 1995). She left office one year later, on June 30, 1996, and was succeeded by Daniel Sullivan '65. Sullivan would go on to serve as a highly successful President for thirteen years and quickly recognized the merits of the FYP. The program would never again face a credible threat to its existence.

5.5. Research Question 4: Perceived Culture Change

The FYP proved to be a watershed movement for the University. As explained by Kling, “it was an impetus that began with the FYP...that lead to other changes that were unstoppable. Once the cork was pulled, so to speak, it was a cascade of change. The university is very different today” (personal communication). I will now discuss these perceived changes to institutional culture, as shared by the interview participants. One key finding is the FYP did shape the interpersonal relationships between members of the campus community; I will discuss the ways in which interview participants specifically identified how faculty-student relationships changed, and how peer-to-peer interactions were also impacted. Due to these changing interpersonal relationships, two fundamental changes in student culture were identified; these include how the FYP played an integral role in the eventual decline in Greek life at St. Lawrence, while also being a primary driver in the University’s efforts to strengthen its response to – and support for – survivors of sexual assault. I will conclude by outlining changes to faculty and administrative culture, which include an increase in interdisciplinary efforts, the FYP serving as a vehicle for professional development, and an eventual shift to a unified administrative focus for the University.

5.5.1. Relationships Strengthened

One finding affirmed by most of the interview participants was that the residential college structure of the FYP strengthened interpersonal relationships between faculty and students. It also fundamentally changed the academic and social transition into the campus community for students, thereby altering long-dominant cultural patterns and the way students formed social relationships with one another. Johnson shared:

I think when it worked well it really gave a good opportunity for students and faculty to get to know one another. It was just richer than having students that you didn't know come into a class and walk away and you never saw them outside of class. (personal communication)

This was supported by Stoddard, who explained how this dynamic strengthened academic advising, as well:

In the average faculty classroom situation you would never get to know students the way you do in the FYP. I mean everything, like their backgrounds, their problems, their interests, everything. I just think that you can be a much better advisor under those circumstances....People talk about their students from the FYP more directly than they do about other students. (personal communication)

How the living-learning structure of the FYP changed the relationship between faculty and students perhaps best illustrated by a story shared by Thacker:

I knew before I was age five, I've always been a "Doctor Thacker"-type, but almost immediately in the First-Year Program, students who were in my FYP just call me "Thacker." Right? And see lots of us have that same experience and it's an acknowledgement of a different relationship than just the teacher-student relationship you would have if you were just taking a class. (personal communication)

The intentional effort to house students in a residential college based on academic interests also contributed to culture change. Kling explained, "if anything changed the culture of St. Lawrence, it was the creation of heterogeneous student communities who never would have lived together without the FYP. It's not the classes, not the great ideas

the faculty bring....the class is secondary” (personal communication). This perception was supported by Johnson, who shared:

It is clear that the first year is when you share a college bond together. Not always, of course, but...many students made their best friends for the duration of their college years with the people they were in [FYP] College with....I think it's stronger with the FYP because they start from orientation-on being together and they have friends in their College from that, so I think that has had a big effect. (personal communication)

Larsen supported this assessment, providing an example of how the social connections formed between students in the FYP started to last through the senior year:

The thing our students always loved is living together. The student life, they loved it. And they used to come over – they still do – for the [Senior Week] reunions....and I tell you, my last FYP college, only two students didn't show up. And students came back who had transferred away! (personal communication)

One positive benefit of students living in residential colleges was other student sub-cultures that had not felt as socially connected in the past started to find support in new ways. The GDIs could more easily find one another:

Every young person...enjoys being social. But I think that [the FYP] really created a place for students who weren't as focused on parties or alcohol. It created a place for them to make friends and to succeed. It wasn't that you didn't want to go to...the party, like everybody else, but now you had choices. Students could meet and interact with other students in their FYP College on many levels....Students could more easily find, create, and join social groups with people who shared their interests and values, because they interacted with them both academically and socially. So I think the FYP changed the student culture. (Swartz, personal communication)

Cornwell further clarified how the residential college structure provided organic opportunities first-year students to connect with one another on both an academic and social level:

It impacted students...I think it really did help them connect with St. Lawrence and with each other, and understand that liberal education is an interdisciplinary enterprise. Being part of a living/learning community, students would always say, “When I'm writing a paper, so is my roommate and so is everybody on the hall. When we're preparing for an exam we're talking about the text.” It's just a very

powerful educational design and students would say that stuff back to us. So, I think to some extent it did really actually improve the engagement of student culture with the mission of the college (personal communication)

5.5.2. The Fall of Greek Life

Despite the presence of the new strict guidelines established by the REC 26 committee, Greek houses – and in particular, fraternities – continued to be the cause of major disciplinary problems on campus throughout the 1990's and early 2000's.

However, REC 26 now provided a policy framework to finally take permanent action, and the new President did. “They killed themselves,” is how Larsen explained it.

Johnson clarified, “Sullivan’s genius was you just waited until they messed up...he just waited until a fraternity would screw up and he’d exile them. He almost got it all the way” (personal communication). What Johnson means by “almost got it all the way” is the fact that, between 1997 and 2007, five different fraternities would be permanently suspended from St. Lawrence due to disciplinary incidents. One sorority would also go inactive during this time and would not return. By 2016, only two active fraternities and 4 active sororities would remain, comprising a mere 15% of the student population. A drastically reduced Greek system, combined with a Rush and pledging process that did not begin until sophomore year, fundamentally altered the social experience of the first-year student transition at St. Lawrence. Lehr hinted at how this change was facilitated by the FYP by sharing:

I think that changing the Greek system had a much more powerful impact on the student culture than the FYP. Now whether we would have done that without the FYP, I don’t know, but I don’t know why we wouldn’t have... I suspect, though, that our first-year students would be much less happy if they had neither a Greek system nor an FYP. (personal communication).

This statement, along with a deep understanding of how entrenched the Greek system had historically been at St. Lawrence, demonstrates how the FYP created the necessary cultural shifts in academic and social connections for students to facilitate a relatively uncontested decline of Greek life.

5.5.3. More Support for Sexual Assault Survivors

Another change in student culture, driven by the deeper relationships developed between faculty and students in the FYP, was a higher level of awareness of, and support for, survivors of sexual assault. As Lehr explained:

Our faculty are more inclined if they know a student is having a problem to pick up a phone and call somebody and try to deal with it...[they] really do care and are going to intervene; [they know] there are resources outside of [academic affairs] that you should take advantage of and I think that is important for faculty. (Lehr, personal communication)

This general sentiment helps explain the actions Stoddard took when she was made aware of an incident of sexual assault in her FYP. After going to the appropriate resources and not getting the needed support, Stoddard explained “that’s actually what spurred me into like getting the special hearing board and Advocates set-up...I was totally frustrated with the administration and their unwillingness to do anything about it” (personal communication). Stoddard explained how she served on Faculty Council at the time and, with the help of other faculty including Peter Bailey and Dick Perry, they developed a progressive new set of procedures for reporting and adjudicating cases of sexual assault. Reflecting upon these actions, Stoddard shared:

All of this did really spring from the fact that I was in the first-year program. I think that if I hadn’t been in the FYP, I wouldn’t have had that kind of knowledge of what was going on with residential life, or feel that it was my responsibility to do something (personal communication)

5.5.4. Increase in Interdisciplinary Efforts

While all interview participants felt departmentalism still existed at St. Lawrence, several did acknowledge an increase in interdisciplinary efforts and felt such new efforts were attributable to the cultural shifts associated with the FYP. For example, when discussing Global Studies and Gender Studies, Kling stated, “I can’t say the FYP created Global Studies – but the *atmosphere* created by the FYP opened up the grants that led to Global Studies. The same can be said for Gender Studies” (personal communication). Stoddard supported this argument by stating, “I think the change happening in the FYP broke down a lot of barriers and it’s really shaped the culture of the institution, and the academic culture of the institution” (personal communication). Tied to these interdisciplinary efforts was a change in the delivery of instruction in the classroom, with team-teaching becoming a far more prevalent practice. Reflecting upon his 44-year teaching career, Johnson shared:

I think maybe interdisciplinary work has become more common; there may be other reasons for that as well, but [the FYP] certainly has to be a part of that....Interdisciplinary work was relatively uncommon when I first arrived [in 1972], and when it did exist it existed mostly in the form of somebody coming in to do a guest lecture or something like that. (personal communication)

This perception was supported by Lehr, who clarified:

One of the things the FYP did that was really great was it made interdisciplinary much more present on this campus. It made team teaching a viable kind of way of teaching that is still more common here than in other places” (Lehr)

The new interdisciplinary programs ultimately attracted a new, more diverse applicant pool of faculty, further altering the faculty culture at St. Lawrence:

The FYP it allowed us to give birth to all those other interdisciplinary studies and then the recruitment of people who were different from the people working here in terms of minority and gay folks...and it became a much more pluralistic world by 1992, much more open about it. (Guarasci, personal communication)

5.5.5. Professional Development of Faculty

In addition to creating stronger relationships between faculty and students, the findings of this study also demonstrate how the FYP created space for faculty to engage with one another and led to opportunities for professional development. This cultural shift can also be credited to the efforts of Guarasci, who intentionally structured the FYP in a way that fostered shared governance and buy-in from those who taught in the program:

[The FYP] was not only in a school for pedagogy, it was a leadership program too....This is organically what was going on....We were gaining confidence about a vision of a university that was an engaged, more democratic place with a much more vibrant student culture around learning and thinking and challenging who they were, connecting with the world around them. (Guarasci, personal communication)

This vision of the program and the greater academy continued under the leadership of Guarasci's successor, as Cornwell explained:

I think really what happened is we were building a scholarship around the FYP and demonstrating its impact...this has now become not just a beginning of the St. Lawrence experience, but the fiber of the St. Lawrence experience because...faculty who had cycled through it brought back to their departments some of the pedagogy and educational philosophies of the FYP. (personal communication).

Cornwell went on to explain how every year he and his colleagues would intentionally build a faculty culture supportive of development within the FYP, resulting in many faculty finding a stronger sense of belonging and sense of intellectual stimulation with the FYP than they did within their own department. This, in turn, resulted in the program

“influencing the rest of the faculty culture at St. Lawrence because... teaching was utterly transformed...[and] how they thought about their pedagogy was all very influenced by what they had done and learned in the FYP” (Cornwell, personal communication). This perspective was supported by Lehr, who explained:

It really created a community among faculty who were teaching in the program, who were running the program, that I don’t think was present anywhere else....I think we have a culture that supports faculty development in very strong ways and I think that grew out of the FYP. (personal communication)

Johnson agreed with the notion that enhanced faculty development helped change culture, stating:

The [change] I’m most confident about is the faculty and teaching the FYP...I certainly think for a while, that faculty began to incorporate the teaching of the skills into their courses beyond the FYP, because they were rotated into the FYP and it became natural to take it back to their other classes; I saw that and it became part of the culture. (personal communication)

The cultural benefits of this professional development resonated throughout the institution and beyond. Gurasci explained how, of the original twelve faculty who taught in the 1987 pilot, five of them became college presidents, while all but one of them became a Dean. “Isn’t that amazing?...that is a statement about institutional transformation” (Guarasci, personal communication). The final key finding of this study builds off this observation, as several of these future Deans would help lead St. Lawrence in the coming decades and shape the institution in other positive ways.

5.5.6. Unified Administrative Focus for the Institution

Shortly after the arrival of President Sullivan, the decision was made to shift all non-academic responsibilities away from the FYP and reinstate a traditional reporting structure for the Division of Student Affairs. The Dean of Students once again was

responsible for all aspects of student life, from first-year through senior year. The expectation moving forward was the Associate Dean of the First-Year would oversee all academic-related aspects to program, while student affairs would collaborate closely to ensure Residence Life, Orientation, and other student life-related programming continued to fully support the FYP. While this shift back to a traditional student affairs structure did experience a very rocky transition, over time the problems that arose were addressed.

Despite this change, the fact St. Lawrence's FYP was a truly comprehensive living-learning program for almost a decade – with both academic and residential responsibilities reporting directly to it – would prove to have a profound cultural impact. During that that time, faculty had played an integral role in administering student life, altering their assumptions and beliefs about the role student affairs plays within a campus community:

We would have weekly meetings which would include the faculty, the RAs and the RDs, so the faculty on a week-in, week-out basis were coming to understand that the student social relations, and their health and well-being, directly impacted their ability to be engaged with the academics. So faculty really came to understand how complex student affairs is, how important it is to the mission. Once they got through that experience they were like, "Okay, I take these people much more seriously and I understand that this too is part of my work." It was just a whole different day. (Cornwell, personal communication)

In the coming years, several of the younger faculty who taught faithfully in the FYP during the formational years of their careers would go on to serve the institution in key leadership roles and unify the administrative focus of the institution. For thirteen consecutive years, from 2003 to 2016, a former Associate Dean of the First-Year would serve continuously as the Chief Academic Affairs Officers at St. Lawrence. This tenure

started with Cornwell in 2003, who was followed by Lehr in 2007. Reflecting upon the impact of the FYP on her own professional growth, Lehr shared:

Having done the FYP I have a much deeper connection to student life and interest in student life than I otherwise would have. Whether that made any difference in terms of how I was as a Dean of Academic Affairs, I don't really know. It's just kind of how I think, given the way I developed within this culture. (personal communication)

Another faculty member who served in a key leadership position was Thacker, who was the Associate Dean of Academic Advising for six years, from 2006 to 2012. He explained, "I've always said the purpose of the FYP is the 'shake the high school out of them,' and it allows us to do that in every respect" (personal communication). Thacker then shared how his experience teaching in the FYP, and having this pragmatic perspective of educating the whole student, directly shaped his approach as a Dean:

While serving as the Associate Dean of Academic Advising, what I thought I was doing was basically applying to the whole student body the principles that I had been applying to first-year students in the FYP for a long time....We do everything that you need us to do, which is to say, we create a community by design. We create a space in which that community can begin to flourish. And it serves, I think, all of our students. (Thacker, personal communication)

Responses from interview participants indicate the journey the FYP embarked on to survive, and the unique experiences faculty involved with it went through, fundamentally shaped faculty values and assumptions about what a liberal arts education should be – and how the college should deliver that educational experience. Jockel shared how the FYP "changed our notion of the relationship between residential life and you see that in our campus programs, you see that in activities here; there is no longer...the indication that the two are separate" (personal communication). White,

reflecting on her 53 years of service at the University, noted the perception of change from the student affairs perspective:

I think that now, especially having the...Associate Dean for First-Year, Associate Dean for Advising, everything seems more connected now. We know what's going on, not just for first-years, not just for upperclass...I think that's been a good thing... It's interesting how things change, back when I first started here [in 1963] we never paid much attention the way we do now about this kid having an issue, or that kid having an issue....How did we get through without knowing what was going on? I don't know. But of course, it was a different time.
(personal communication)

When reflecting on how faculty and administrative cultures have changed and become more unified in their vision, interview participants – most of whom had spent decades serving the university – described a more holistic approach to academic affairs-student affairs responsibilities that are now beginning to emerge. This was perhaps best expressed by Thacker, who concluded:

More than anything...at most places there's this side of the house [academics] and that side of the house [student affairs], but we don't have a side of the house....[we are a] shared endeavor where people who were primarily classroom teachers and people who were student affairs professionals...don't see a dividing line between themselves. It's not all the FYP, but I think it's got a lot to do with that. (personal communication)

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Students face a number of defining challenges during their first year in college. These challenges can be overcome through the personal relationships they develop with faculty and other members of the campus community (Chambliss & Takacs, 2014). It is important for institutions to change in ways that provide a more seamless living-learning experience, thereby enabling students to transition successfully into college life. However, one of the most common challenges facing colleges and universities that seek change is a tendency for institutional culture dynamics to be potentially divisive and foster internal conflict (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Such conflict impacts faculty, students, and administrative subcultures.

One potential solution to the problem of divisive institutional culture dynamics being compounded by structural disconnects of academic and residential life are residentially based living-learning programs (LLPs). As explained by Kuh (1996), LLPs integrate the classroom and residence hall environments, blurring the traditional boundaries between the classroom and co-curricular experience. This integrated residential experience has the capability of facilitating a cohesive cultural bridge between faculty, students, and administrators (Levin Laufgraben, O'Connor, & Williams, 2007). When faculty and administration are able to partner in ways that overcome divisive cultural dynamics, opportunities are created to better educate the whole student and greatly enhance the campus climate (Nash et al., 2016). Ironically enough, institutions of higher education are well-known for being naturally resistant to change themselves; colleges and universities identify strongly with their own cultural heritage and are often

charged in part by society to preserve cultural and social norms (Shapiro & Levine, 1999). It is important for educational leaders to understand these complex, culturally-based conflicts and possess the ability to interpret and overcome these challenges (Tierney, 1988).

This study examined the internal conflict and cultural implications related to the founding and implementation of St. Lawrence University's First-Year Program (FYP), a comprehensive LLP aimed at supporting the first-year student transition. Following its implementation, the FYP fostered a relational capacity within the campus community to facilitate institutional culture change. This shows evidence of a reciprocal relationship between cultural influence and culture change, thereby supporting the research serving as the theoretical framework of this study describing culture as a fluid concept that is "always evolving, continually created and recreated by ongoing patterns of interactions between individuals, groups, and an institution's internal and external environments" (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p. 14). In this chapter the findings of this study, as outlined in Chapter 5, will be discussed. How these findings relate to previous literature in the fields of institutional culture, organizational change, and campus residential living-learning programs (LLPs) will also be highlighted. This study's concluding themes will then be discussed, followed by a reexamination of the research limitations. This chapter will conclude by identifying implications for future practice and future research, as the findings of this study may help inform educational leaders promoting positive change within their respective institutions.

6.1. Discussion of Findings

A number of cultural factors and tensions between students, faculty, and administrators led to efforts by the St. Lawrence faculty to seek change within their campus community. This led to the push for a new academic curriculum, culminating in the creation of the FYP. Such a narrative of culturally-rooted progression for change is supported by the literature, as internal dynamics and interpersonal conflict can often trace their roots to the organizational histories of the institution (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Tierney, 1988). The student culture at St. Lawrence was dominated by Greek life and described by interview participants as anti-intellectual. This closely aligns with the description of the “college men” and “college women” subcultures identified by Horowitz (1987). Her research shows how campus life in the United States has, in fact, been dominated by these student groups – and their focus on vibrant social life and a lack of intellectual adventure – for much of history.

Administrators at St. Lawrence were largely seen as supportive of this dominant student culture and the Greek system; what is interesting about this case study is the number of senior-level administrators who were also alumni of St. Lawrence, further solidifying this close connection between administration and students. When looking at this relational dynamic through the lens of Berquist’s (1992) research and what he calls “managerial” culture, it becomes clear the administration viewed the university as a mechanism to impart specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes in students so they could become successful and responsible citizens in society. They genuinely believed the Greek system was a healthy and effective mechanism to transmit the requisite values and

skills. After all, it had worked so well for each them when they were students.

Unfortunately, this cultural belief led to direct conflict between administration and faculty at St. Lawrence. However, there is evidence to suggest several staff members within the Division of Student Affairs ultimately recognized the need for change and were supportive – at least in principle – of the FYP. In particular, a closer examination of Dr. Howison’s time as Vice President of Student Life shows potential existed for more collaborative efforts between the two divisions during the FYP’s formative years, had Howison chose to stay at the institution.

Faculty culture at St. Lawrence was found to be friendly, committed to their students, and grounded in teaching – yet also deeply divided. This description also aligns with the literature, as Kuh & Whitt (1988) explain how “segmentation and fragmentation are characteristic of the academic profession, but an integrating effect of overarching basic values also exists” (p. 75). One unanticipated finding of this study was the link between the 1960’s student activism movement and the formation of the FYP. Building off the work of Horowitz (1987), and tying the history of St. Lawrence in with the overarching historical narrative of higher education in the United States, this study was able to illustrate how the shared assumptions and beliefs of many faculty connected to the FYP movement were directly influenced by their own personal engagement with student activism in the 1960’s and 1970’s. This led to a sharp division between subcultures within the faculty and a “culture war” in the 1980’s and early 1990’s. The underlying friction between faculty subcultures ultimately stemmed from differences in their respective assumptions and beliefs about where knowledge comes from, and how it

should be taught. Another fundamental difference was how FYP faculty viewed authority; much like student activists who pushed back against perceived power structures in the 1960's, faculty connected to the FYP challenged the authority of the President, administration, and a faculty governance structure controlled by departmentalization. Reinforcing the work of Bergquist (1992), the FYP faculty displayed characteristics of an advocacy/negotiating culture, seeking to establish an equitable distribution of institutional resources, while at the same time possessing an inherently conflicting view the University – or, at the very least, other cultures within the campus community – as a representation of “existing and often repressive social structures” (p. 5). Shifting demographic factors also influenced faculty tensions throughout this time, with younger faculty from more diverse backgrounds challenging older, predominately male faculty in ways the University had not seen before.

The FYP is a comprehensive residential college system with a team-taught first-year seminar course as its focal point. Cultural factors were equally important in guiding this program in such a direction, playing to the culturally-based strengths of the institution. This course of action supports the work of Cooperrider and Whitney (2005), who promote the concept of “appreciative inquiry” when seeking organizational change. As described earlier, St. Lawrence is a small, close-knit liberal arts college in a remote location with committed teaching faculty and dedicated administrators, many of whom are SLU alums. Everyone cared deeply about the students. A residential college system such as the one adopted by St. Lawrence played to these institutional strengths. At least one interview participant who helped develop the FYP was influenced heavily by Clark's

(1970) concept of “the distinctive college,” and references to this literature are alluded to in many of the documents chronicling the early development of the program.

Furthermore, it is important to remember Marden’s (1985) explanation of how the motivation behind the development of this program differed from residential college systems at other institutions – the faculty were not attempting to create the perception of a smaller-scale institution, yet rather “enrich academic life by blurring the distinction between the classroom and residential life at an institution” (p. 2). This supports the work of Tierney (1988), who advocated for leaders to seek change in culturally-sensitive ways. This finding demonstrates how important it is for each institution to reflect deeply on the cultural strengths and weaknesses encapsulating it, and to consider these factors when determining the type of organizational change they seek – as well as the roadmap they adopt in an effort to achieve it.

The narrative shared in this study makes one common theme very clear – institutional change is hard. This finding is supported by literature focusing on the formation of other LLPs (Watts, 1999; Shapiro & Levine, 1999; Lenning et al., 2013), as well as literature highlighting successful organizational change efforts (Senge, 1990; Schein, 2004; Heifetz et al., 2009). At St. Lawrence, change was ignited by the willingness of a President, Dr. W. Lawrence “Lawry” Gulick, to adopt what Heifetz et al. (2009) would identify as a course of adaptive leadership. In this case study, the necessary leadership of President Gulick consisted of empowering a group of progressive faculty to seek desired change and providing them with the resources necessary to fundamentally alter the preexisting power structure on campus. Faculty debates at St.

Lawrence focusing on the FYP, and the corresponding “culture wars,” were an emotionally-charged period in the institution’s history. It resulted in a fracturing of the faculty and loss of collegiality. The quality of work performed by the Division of Student Affairs was openly questioned by faculty and scrutinized by multiple tripartite committees. These actions lead to a fractured relationship between faculty and administration lasting almost 25 years. The impact of these multiple conflicts, and the undercurrent of the emotions behind them, illustrate the work of Kotter (2012) and the important role interpersonal connections play when seeking to facilitate positive change. It is vital to point out how each of these subcultures at St. Lawrence were fighting over shared common ground – in this case, faculty on both sides, as well as administrators, cared deeply for the students and the institution. Unfortunately, the faculty factions had vastly different, culturally-based views on what the future direction of the university – and the student experience for first-year students at St. Lawrence – should look like moving forward. The same can be said for the conflict between faculty and student affairs administrators; differences stemmed from divergent cultural perspectives on how to best provide support, and work with the university’s Greek system, to promote a positive and academically-focused student experience.

6.2. Conclusions: Fostering Relational Capacity for Culture Change

The findings of this study demonstrate how the FYP shaped cultural conditions at St. Lawrence University in a number of ways following its implementation, indicating this comprehensive LLP fostered a relational capacity to facilitate institutional culture change. At the root of this change is the way in which the comprehensive LLP in this

particular case study was able to influence human relationships. Specifically, the interpersonal relationships between students, faculty, and administrators were fundamentally altered due to the creation of intentionally-designed residential colleges for first-year students focused around an academic course team-taught by their academic advisors. Two additional factors facilitating institutional culture change were educational leaders who demonstrated resiliency and the ability to apply a culturally-appreciative lens. Since these two factors are requisite traits needed of individuals to foster change, they are discussed in section 6.4 Implications for Future Practice. The connection between relationship building, resilience, and applying a culturally-appreciative lens is illustrated in Figure 6.

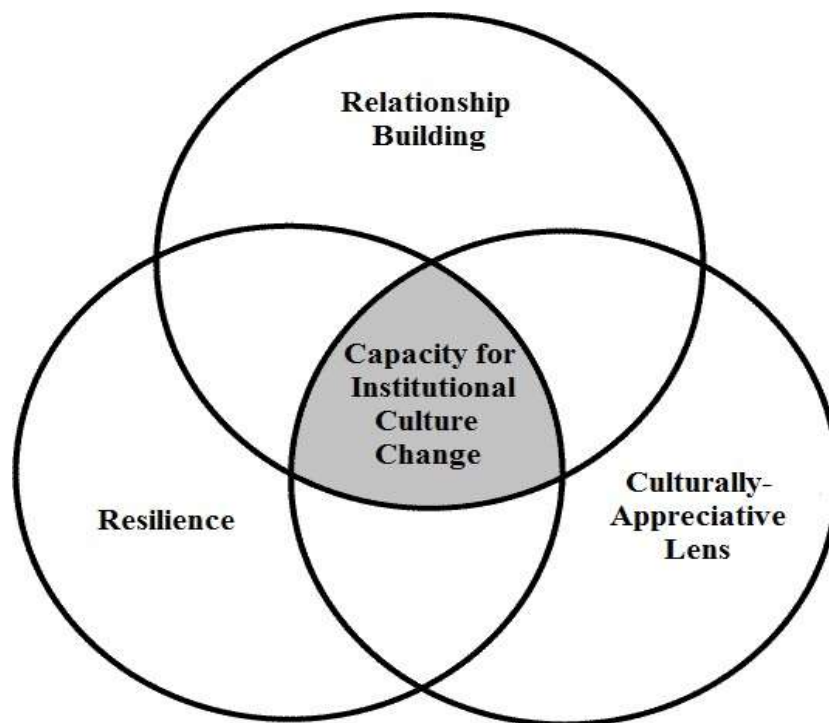


Figure 6: Concluding Themes

The interpersonal relationships that members of the campus community forged with one another proved to be the fundamental building block to how culture forms – and how it can be changed. This concluding theme supports the work of Chambliss & Takacs (2014), who also highlighted the importance of relationships and argued healthy engagement in college life is predicated upon whom you meet, and when. For students at St. Lawrence, their transition into college life and the types of bonds they forged were transformed by the FYP. First-year students began to integrate into their academic and social lives in meaningfully different ways. They were now living in intentionally-designed residential communities driven by their shared academic interests, thereby creating space for healthier peer interactions. First-year students were going to class together, studying together, and were now more inclined to engage in academically-focused conversations. These peer groups were also far less homogeneous than the dominant social pathways in place at St. Lawrence prior to the FYP, which had been heavily influenced by upperclass students, the Greek system, and a highly-visible party culture. The work of Newcomb (1943) shows peer-based “community forces” significantly influence first-year student attitudes, beliefs, and interests as they transition into college life, while Wallace (1966) found upperclass students and Greeks often promote negative academic attitudes.

The faculty-student relationship was also thrust into a more prominent role. Research clearly shows this shift has a positive impact on academic achievement, retention, satisfaction, and engagement (Wallace, 1966; Astin, 1977; Tinto, 1987; Inkelas & Associates, 2008; Mayhew et al., 2016). With faculty building stronger connections

with students, cohorts of first-year students bonding more closely with one another than in the past, and the Greek system becoming more detached from the first-year transition process, a change in student culture on campus was inevitable. These relational changes were found to contribute significantly to the eventual decline of Greek life at St.

Lawrence. The findings of this study demonstrate how the FYP facilitated this cultural shift and allowed the University to transition away from being a Greek-dominated campus; this is a shocking development once the history at St. Lawrence – and its long-standing, deep-seeded commitment to Greek life – is taken into consideration. This change is due to the opportunities LLPs provide, including healthy social engagement while creating a sense of belonging (Inkelas & Associates, 2008; Mayhew et al., 2016).

Thus, the FYP proved to fill a social void for first-year students previously held by the allure of Greek life at St. Lawrence. It also opened students' eyes up to alternative options for engagement and leadership opportunities during their upperclass years beyond the Greek system. The strengthening of interpersonal relationships between faculty and students also contributed to other new dynamics on campus. For example, a dramatic shift in institutional support for survivors of sexual assault at a campus that was categorized by several interview participants as being very male dominant. A majority of faculty also recognized a strengthened academic tone on campus.

For faculty and administrators, the FYP served as a catalyst for the institution to become a true learning organization. This supports the work of Senge (1990) and Lenning et al. (2013). New interdisciplinary programs were launched. The approximately two to three dozen faculty closely involved with the FYP felt a sense of

belonging among their FYP teaching colleagues, while they engaged actively in professional development opportunities in unparalleled ways that had never been seen before at St. Lawrence. Professional development identified by interview participants included honing stronger pedagogical skills, as well as gaining a deeper understanding of the work performed by student affairs professionals. This enabled faculty to develop a more holistic understanding of residential life and how student experiences outside of the classroom – both good and bad – have a dramatic impact on academic success and student engagement (Astin, 1977; Kuh et al., 1991). This unique experience has energized veteran faculty who have long been associated with the FYP, with many of them to this day still committing to the institution – and their students – beyond just teaching. Despite being on close to retirement, these faculty members carry large advising loads, serve on committees, are a highly-visible presence on campus, and continue to push for positive change in 2017 in the same way they did in 1987. The connections formed between faculty and students due to the living-learning structure of the FYP fundamentally shaped the educational philosophies of an entire generation of faculty, proving to be the cornerstone of many successful presidencies and deanships at other institutions – and at St. Lawrence. This also led to strengthened interpersonal relationships over time between faculty and student affairs administrators, ultimately leading to a unified administrative focus for the institution. In many ways, the faculty and staff at St. Lawrence have adopted an approach that Nash (2016) calls “working together as crossover educators” (p. 7). They now share a common vision for how academic and residential life should intersect and complement one another – and each

view their job as working together to support, teach, and mentor students so that their students can reach their full potential.

6.3. Revisiting Limitations

As previously discussed in Chapter 3, several limitations exist in this case study, which will now be revisited. Limitations are potential weaknesses to a research study that are out of the control of the researcher. The sample size of this study was fourteen total interview participants. This included a diverse mix of faculty and administrators, including nine men and five women, with many different academic disciplines represented. A total of six participants were faculty who supported the program, six were administrators, and two were faculty who opposed the program.⁸ I had originally anticipated including more interview participants who were faculty opposed to the program, as well as student affairs administrators. Unfortunately, several individuals who were contacted declined to be interviewed and other key figures are now deceased. Increasing the number of faculty who opposed the program, as well as the number of student affairs administrators, would strengthen this study if it were to be replicated. Another consideration to strengthen this study would be to seek a more balanced gender mix.

Another limitation is the fact this case study focused on one comprehensive LLP at a small, private liberal arts college in the Northeast. On a basic level, all colleges and universities share the common threads that define institutional culture, including artifacts, values, and basic assumptions and beliefs (Tierney, 1988; Kuh & Whitt, 1988).

⁸ Three of the administrators in this study also held tenured faculty positions with the university.

However, variances in such cultural factors can be significant. Therefore, even if this study were to be conducted at multiple sites, each would ultimately offer a distinct blend of academic, administrative, and student sub-cultures, thereby creating natural limitations in how the findings could be applied to other institutions of higher education. St. Lawrence University has rich history, with one of its core features being how proud students, alumni, faculty, and staff are of its culture. However, each college leader should be careful to consider their own institutional culture and what the implementation of a comprehensive LLP may – or may not – change on their respective campus. Therefore, the findings of this study transferrable, but not generalizable.

6.4. Implications for Future Practice

This case study examined the internal conflict and cultural implications related to the founding of a comprehensive first-year residential college system at St. Lawrence University, demonstrating how this program fostered a relational capacity to facilitate institutional culture change. In the same way that the findings of this study are transferable, but not generalizable, what the individual reader of this case study may find compelling or insightful for future practice at their respective institutions is likely to be subjective, based on the cultural conditions of that college or university. However, this study yields two significant implications that are likely to be transferrable to most institutions of higher education. First and foremost, *creating successful institutional culture change is hard – and campus leaders need to be prepared and resilient to overcome the challenge*. As former St. Lawrence President Gulick shared, “change is a hell of a hard thing to get done in an academic institution” (personal communication).

Second, *understanding the fundamental values, assumptions, and beliefs of different institutional subcultures is critical; campus leaders who can apply a culturally-appreciative lens by interpreting these factors, finding common ground, and collaborating with others are more likely to succeed.* Campus leaders should not underestimate the cultural and political implications of any effort to push forward with such a fundamentally meaningful curricular change. The founders of St. Lawrence's experimental East College, Dr. Marden and Dr. Jockel, correctly identified how the cultural strengths of St. Lawrence aligned with the academic and social benefits offered by a residential college structure. The first Director of the First-Year Program, Dr. Guarasci, built upon the residential model and successfully mobilized an entire coalition of faculty seeking positive culture change. His successor, Dr. Cornwell, then correctly identified how polarizing the program had become during its foundational years and took active steps to find common ground between different campus stakeholders. Cornwell's culturally-sensitive actions likely saved the FYP.

Building bridges between academic and residential life can be a great opportunity for student affairs practitioners to step into a leadership role and work collaboratively with faculty. Faculty are educated, trained, and socialized within a respective academic discipline, leading to a terminal degree; yet this highly specialized pathway can actually create natural barriers for holistic learning opportunities and crossover pedagogies. For many faculty, the complex developmental growth students present in raw form outside of the classroom can be a scary proposition. However, as Kuh et al. (1991) contend, personal development can be greatly enhanced through student engagement and learning

outside of the classroom. Therefore, it is incumbent upon student affairs practitioners to work with faculty, seek out ways to lower the learning anxiety surrounding residential life and the co-curricular experience, and identify collaborative opportunities supporting holistic learning. As the work of Nash et al. (2016) proposes, such efforts between faculty and student affairs practitioners should be considered a new dimension of interdisciplinary practice.

At the conclusion of each interview, I asked each participant to share any advice they had for campus leaders who may be considering implementing a comprehensive LLP at their respective campus. The fact that change does not come easy was the most common theme. Every member of a campus community comes in with different values, assumptions, and beliefs based on their personal background and life experiences. Finding a way to navigate these differences, build genuine relationships, and find common ground is very difficult. I will now share insight from each of the first three Directors/Deans of the First-Year Program, as well as the President who proved to be instrumental in galvanizing faculty efforts to launch this transformative program. Dr. Guarasci, the first Director of the First-Year Program and Professor of Government, affirmed the primary focus of this study by stating, “So, you’re right on the mark with saying this whole relationship between the residential education community and [the FYP]...its mission at St. Lawrence was to specifically change campus culture; that was the goal” (personal communication). He also agreed change is not easy and explained:

Change is complicated, it’s difficult, people resist. Lots of people are waiting for change; if you’re the leader...it’s all about not just vision, but about resiliency. You have to ultimately be the person who is able to take a lot of wounding comments...Baylor Johnson said this to me once when I was complaining in the

first year about opposition, he said, “You’ve got to have tougher skin than anybody else... those students are waiting for you to defend them and stand by them and those other colleagues or administrators are waiting for that.” (Guarasci, personal communication)

The next faculty to lead of the program, Dr. Cornwell, who served as Associate Dean of the First Year and Professor of Philosophy, reflected upon the need to be resilient and added to it by reaffirming the importance of relationship building and respecting different perspectives:

You can never underestimate the importance of personal politics in engineering change. I mean spending time with people one-on-one in their offices, listening to their concerns, and sparring with them around a set of ideas, asking for their support. You know curricular politics *are* politics; you have to actually campaign. Look for support by respecting everybody and listening to them and trying to get them onboard, so if you’re thinking of doing something like this from a committee or a Dean’s office forget it – it is hand-to-hand combat. (personal communication)

Cornwell’s perspective was supported by Dr. Lehr, who succeed him as the third Associate Dean of the First Year and was a Professor of Government and Coordinator of Gender Studies. She reinforced how critical collaboration and involving all stakeholders – especially students – is in the process of fostering positive change:

I think really trying to create something where you build rethinking into it and flexibility is important. This includes talking to students about what’s working for them and what’s not. I think the idea that you’re going to come up with a grand vision and implement it and it’s going to work is, in most cases, insane. (Lehr, personal communication)

I will now share an important reflection from Dr. Kling, who worked closely with Guarasci, Cornwell, and Lehr throughout the foundational years of this program from 1987 to 1996: “What makes any administrative system effective is totally contingent upon the nature of the personnel. There are no algorithms for how to successfully make

change....You need people committed to change, to making a difference” (personal communication).

Former St. Lawrence President Gulick summarized the difficulty of changing an institution’s culture most succinctly. Over the course of his career, he created his own maxims: Gulick’s First and Second Laws of the Academy. Gulick’s First Law of the Academy is *things take longer than they do*. Gulick’s Second Law of the Academy is *never do anything for the first time*. As he explained, the Second Law “is a joke, but the indication there is...it’s very difficult to institute change” (Gulick, personal communication).

Understanding the fundamental values, assumptions, and beliefs of different institutional subcultures is critical; campus leaders who can apply a culturally-appreciative lens by interpreting these factors, finding common ground, and collaborating are more likely to succeed. Throughout much of this narrative, the relationship between faculty and student affairs professionals was strained, to say the least. The consecutive departures of two former Vice Presidents of Student Life, Van de Water and Howison, are tragedies. Both men were campus leaders who cared deeply for the institution, the students, and the local community. They did not want to leave St. Lawrence, yet felt it was necessary to do so. It is difficult, if not impossible, to predict if the FYP could have had the same transformational impact without the presence of such strong tensions between faculty and student affairs. Reflecting upon the history of St. Lawrence and how faculty, administrative, and student subcultures have evolved over time, it becomes clear the collision course faculty and student affairs was on by the 1980’s was unavoidable.

The FYP and its faculty essentially won a power struggle. For about a decade, the faculty fully absorbed all student affairs responsibilities related to the first-year student experience. As discussed previously, this unique structural change had a significant and positive impact on the professionalization of faculty that still resonates at St. Lawrence and beyond to this day. That being said, it is fair to question whether a more culturally-appreciative lens could have been applied by all key campus leaders involved – with the outcome being a more collaborative solution that did not lead to such acrimony, particularly between faculty and student affairs administrators. Had such an alternative outcome occurred, would the careers of Van de Water or Howison – and the direction of student affairs at St. Lawrence throughout the 1990's and early 2000's – turned out differently? Almost thirty years later, several interview participants did highlight the importance of having healthy collaborations between these two groups, with some even expressing regret over how the original divide between faculty and student affairs played out:

If I had to do it over again and were giving advice, I'd say draw Student Life in more robustly and use their expertise to figure out how you can get students and faculty to bond in a way...that helps faculty model the life and the mind for students. (Johnson, personal communication)

Jockel agreed, offering valuable insight by identifying efforts to implement LLPs as opportunities for student affairs professionals to lead:

Faculty members, keep in mind that [the residential component] is going to be threatening, but it can be awful fun too....student affairs administration, don't be too protective [of your turf]...I always felt sort of like an amateur in all of this...this is an opportunity for administrators to take some real leadership. (personal communication)

As a St. Lawrence graduate and SLU faculty member with over 35 years of experience, Jockel's admission is strong vote of confidence in the vital role student affairs professionals can play in such efforts to bring about positive change to campus culture.

As he concluded his interview, Guarasci reminded us why undeterred efforts to foster holistic learning opportunities and positive culture change are so important:

People are waiting on [you] to stand with them...those students are waiting for you to defend them...and those other colleagues or administrators are waiting for that. Your community partners are counting on you to not walk away because it's a little difficult. So, I think if there is anything I would say to young emerging leaders in higher education – be they students, faculty, staff, presidents, whatever it might be – it's about resiliency; you have to maintain and learn how to...privatize your wounds, get over them after a day or two, have a drink or whatever it takes, and then come back fighting the next day. (personal communication)

Creating positive change is hard; campus leaders need to be prepared for the challenges that lay ahead. Institutional culture change becomes possible when campus stakeholders recognize and value the relationships they share with one another, come together on common ground, and collaborate. Faculty and student affairs practitioners who possess an understanding of how historic trends in student culture intersect with contemporary student development needs – and the skill to translate this knowledge into effective curricular and co-curricular innovations – are needed in today's quickly evolving world of higher education.

6.5. Implications for Future Research

This case study differed from many other studies in the field of LLP research in that it focused on how the program impacted cultural conditions for the institution, as opposed to specific student learning outputs.

Considering the scope of my research questions and the limitations of this particular study, I offer several recommendations for future research that may further contribute to the current body of literature on institutional culture and LLPs.

One consideration for future research would be to adopt a mixed methods approach to this study. Specifically, one could augment it by incorporating quantitative data on student learning outputs. This would allow for my fourth research question to be further explored in great depth: *In what ways do faculty and administrators perceive institutional culture conditions have changed at St. Lawrence University since the implementation of the FYP?* Another future consideration could be conducting similar studies at other institutions that have experienced resistance to the implementation of LLPs. Several haunting questions emerged from this study, which may be worth exploring in future studies. These include (1) who are the key players that cannot be ignored during the change process? (2) How does one best prepare campus members for what lies ahead? With future studies data analysis could also be performed to find common themes between institutions, potentially bolstering the transferability of these findings. Finally, consideration should be given to focusing on the student experience during the implementation phase of comprehensive LLPs. Research questions could potentially focus on what students find favorable or unfavorable during the transition process, and how they interpret any potential changes to institutional values, assumptions, beliefs, and/or artifacts they find cultural significant. While this particular aspect of organizational change was specifically omitted from this study due to the theoretical framework adopted, it is a valuable area to explore. This would enable campus leaders to

better understand how to navigate working with students during times of transformational change.

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APPENDICIES

Appendix A. Letter Seeking Access to Research Site

Hello President Fox & Dean Lehr,

I write you today to ask permission to use St. Lawrence University's First-Year Program as a case study for my doctoral dissertation and potentially have my study be non-confidential. As you both know, I have been working part-time on my doctoral degree in Educational Leadership & Policy Studies at the University of Vermont for the past 5 years. The working title of my dissertation proposal is "The Influence of a Comprehensive First-Year Living-Learning Community on Institutional Culture." To provide a brief summary of my intended research, I have included a copy of my IRB summary that I am currently drafting for UVM:

The objective of this study is to provide a detailed description of the impact of a comprehensive living-learning community on institutional culture at a small, private liberal arts college in the Northeast. Through archival material research and qualitative interviews, this study will seek to understand why this program was founded, how it was ultimately able to sustain within the organization, and identify ways in which its presence may have shaped institutional culture.

The setting of this study is St. Lawrence University. The living-learning community being examined is this school's "First-Year Program," a required course for all incoming first-year students at the college.

The procedure involving human subjects used in this study will be in-depth, one-on-one interviews. The interview participants will be administrators and/or faculty who work (or have worked) with the living-learning community at the focus of this study. In an effort to establish a credible and well-rounded narrative, I will also seek to interview faculty who opposed this living-learning community. Some interview participants still work at the school and/or directly with the program being studied, while others are no longer employed by the university (i.e., work elsewhere or retired). The total number of interview participants will be no more than fifteen (15) individuals. Each participant will be interviewed once for approximately 60-90 minutes each. The interview protocol will seek to illuminate the objective of this study by focusing on participants' perceptions of cultural implications – fundamental values, basic assumptions, and shared beliefs – of the campus community.

I am currently in the process of preparing for IRB submission at UVM. Before my research will be approved, I require a letter from "the appropriate University administrator" to have access to the campus.

However, I am also seeking your permission to have this study be non-confidential. If this is ultimately not an option, I completely understand and can proceed using pseudonyms for the institution and the interview participants. However, please first allow me to share my rationale. As I have developed my proposal, it has become clear that the founding of the FYP was a transformational experience for the University in many ways and is an incredibly important narrative story to share. By using institutional culture as my theoretical lens, as a researcher I am beginning to see how the college's

history, people, and values/assumptions/beliefs all weaved together in an intricate way, with each contributing equally to a dynamic time at St. Lawrence. In order to tell this story in the rich and vibrant way it deserves to be told, I feel being able to use the name of the school, its buildings, and its people, is critical.

If there is any additional information I can provide, or if you would like to meet and discuss this proposal further, I would be happy to do so. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Chris

Christopher P. Marquart

Assistant Dean of Student Life

Director of Residence Life & Housing

St. Lawrence University

Canton, NY 13617

(315) 229-5250

Appendix B. Sample Letter to Interview Participants

Dear Dr. Guarasci,

I send you this letter on behalf of Christopher P. Marquart, who is a Doctoral candidate at the University of Vermont. He is currently conducting a study entitled, “The Influence of a Comprehensive First-Year Living-Learning Community on Institutional Culture” and has selected St. Lawrence University’s First-Year Program (FYP) as his case study. Specifically, his research focuses on the cultural implications related to the founding, implementation, and organizational sustainability of the FYP.

Through his preliminary research efforts, Christopher has identified you as a faculty member or administrator who played a key role in the development of the FYP. The purpose of this letter is to formally invite you to be interviewed by Christopher, either in person or via Skype/telephone. The focus of this interview will be the cultural conditions and campus events leading up to the formation of the FYP, the foundational years of the FYP, and the influence this program has since had on institutional culture at St. Lawrence.

A major aim of this study is to use the research findings to assist other leaders in higher education who seek to plan and implement programs for positive organizational change at their respective institutions. Please note this will be a non-confidential study, to which St. Lawrence University has granted Christopher formal approval to use the institution’s name. Therefore, this study will also use the real names of all interview participants (not pseudonyms). Enclosed with this letter you will find a “Consent to Participate in Research” form, which provides additional information related to this study and will be signed by you prior to the interview.

Below is a brief note from Christopher sharing further insight into this study:

“Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. It is my sincere hope you consider participating in this study, as I am deeply interested in learning more about this dynamic period of time in St. Lawrence University’s history. I chose to focus on the FYP through the lens of institutional culture because I feel it is important to chronicle the history of such a program in a way that goes beyond names, dates, and other concrete facts; with this study, I hope to illuminate the ways in which the FYP has influenced interpersonal relationships, impacted the connection between academic and residential life, and ultimately shaped institutional culture for faculty, students, and administrators at St. Lawrence. On a personal note, this topic holds significance to me because I am a Canton native. My family moved to town in November of 1986 – as faculty discussions about the “new Freshman Program” were being held – when I was six years old. As I grew up in the 1980’s and 1990’s, just down the street from campus, so too was the FYP growing and evolving. I consider it an honor and a privilege to

conduct this research – to tell this story in a comprehensive and holistic way – and I sincerely hope you consider participating in this study. Thank you.”

If you are interested in participating in this study, I strongly encourage you to contact Christopher directly at home or at work:

Home: Christopher P. Marquart
7 Maple St.
Canton, NY 13617
Christopher.Marquart@uvm.edu
Cell = 315-212-1294

Work: Christopher P. Marquart
Assistant Dean of Student Life, Director of Residence Life & Housing
St. Lawrence University
23 Romoda Drive – Sullivan Student Center, Suite 230
Canton, NY 13617
cmarquart@stlawu.edu
Office = 315-229-5676

(Please note this study is being undertaken solely in Chris’s capacity as a graduate student at the University of Vermont and is independent of his job responsibilities at St. Lawrence)

I thank you for considering this request. If Christopher or I have not been contacted by September 15, 2016, I will take the liberty to follow-up on this letter with a phone call.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Hansen
Associate Dean of the First Year
Professor of Philosophy
Whitman Annex, Room 6
St. Lawrence University
23 Romoda Drive
Canton, NY 13617
Office: 315.229.5441
Fax: 315.229.5709
[@TeamFYP](#)
[First Year Program Website](#)
[New Laurentian Guide](#)

Appendix C. IRB Consent Form

Consent to Participate in Research

Title of Research Project:	The Influence of a Comprehensive First-Year Living-Learning Community on Institutional Culture
Principal Investigator:	Christopher P. Marquart, Ed.D. Candidate, University of Vermont
Faculty Advisor:	Dr. Deborah E. Hunter, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Chair of Higher Education & Student Affairs, University of Vermont
Sponsor:	Educational Leadership & Policy Studies Program, Department of Leadership & Development Sciences, University of Vermont

Introduction

You are being invited to participate in this study because you were a faculty member or administrator employed at St. Lawrence University during the late 1970's or early 1980's. Specifically, you have been identified as an individual who was involved in one or more of the following efforts related to the early years of the institution's First-Year Program (FYP):

- discussions and/or programmatic efforts to improve student learning, academic advising, and/or the student experience prior to fall 1986;
- faculty debates related to the formation and/or continued existence of the FYP; this may include individuals who supported the FYP as well as those who were philosophically opposed to it;
- formal efforts to organize and/or implement the FYP
- taught in the FYP prior to 2001

Why is This Research Study Being Conducted?

The purpose of this study is to provide a detailed description of the cultural implications related to the founding, implementation, and organizational sustainability of FYP at St. Lawrence University. Through historical document analysis, as well as qualitative research (i.e., individual interviews) focusing on the artifacts, values, assumptions, and

beliefs of the campus community, this case study will seek to understand why this living-learning program was founded, how it was ultimately able to sustain within the organization, and identify ways in which its presence has shaped institutional culture for faculty, students, and administrators. This study is being conducted by Christopher P. Marquart, a Doctoral student at the University of Vermont, in partial fulfillment of the Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership & Policy Studies degree.

How Many People Will Take Part In The Study?

About 12-15 total participants will take part in this study. This includes faculty and administrators who were associated with the FYP during its foundational years, faculty who instituted similar programs in the late 1970's and early 1980's that attempted to promote student success, as well as faculty who opposed the FYP initiative.

What Is Involved In The Study?

If you choose to take part in this study, you will be asked to participate in a single individual interview. This interview will take approximately 90 minutes.

Here are some sample questions:

1. Describe the St. Lawrence campus in the late 1970's and early 1980's
2. What originally drew your interest to working with the FYP? If you were opposed to it, why?
3. What was your specific involvement with the FYP?
4. Do you feel the FYP has changed the culture at St. Lawrence in any way?
5. If this experience were to start all over again, is there anything you would have done differently?

I welcome a meeting with you prior to the interview, should there be any questions you would like answered before the final interview arrangements are made.

You may decide on a meeting location that works best for you or we can meet in an office on the St. Lawrence University campus that provides a sufficient level of privacy. If distance and/or travel-related challenges prevent an in-person meeting, conducting this interview via Skype or telephone (your preference) is also an option.

During the interview, two audio recording devices will be utilized to record the interview. These devices will include an external microphone connected to my laptop, as well as a hand-held digital recorder to be used as a back-up device.

After the interview I will begin the preliminary analysis of the data. You will be asked if I may contact you at a later date in the event I have any clarifying questions. You will also be asked if you would like to receive a copy of the complete interview transcription

so that you may provide any feedback to statements where there may possibly be any inaccuracies or misinterpretations in the raw data. This also provides an opportunity for you to provide any clarification or missing information that might not have been discussed during the interview.

What Are The Benefits of Participating In The Study?

There is no direct benefit to you anticipated from participating in this study. However, it is hoped that the information gained from the study will assist future leaders in higher education who seek to plan and implement programs for positive organizational change at their respective institutions.

What Are The Risks and Discomforts Of The Study?

Potential risks include discussion of any past professional work experiences that you may perceive as uncomfortable or sensitive in nature. Examples include revisiting stories involving negative interactions with colleagues who possessed conflicting cultural beliefs and/or perspectives on scholarship, as well as recounting incidents involving students (in this case, the secondary subjects) that may have been difficult for the student(s) to deal with when they originally occurred.

If an uncomfortable topic is discussed during the interview, we can take a break from the interview and appropriate time can be given to you.

What Other Options Are There?

Taking part in this study is voluntary.

Are There Any Costs?

There are no costs associated with this study.

What Is the Compensation?

You will not be paid to participate in this study.

Can You Withdraw From This Study?

You may discontinue your participation in this study at any time. Should you withdraw from this study, all audio recordings and records associated with your participation will be deleted.

What About Confidentiality?

This is a non-confidential study, but your data will be handled as confidentially as possible while it is being analyzed. If results of this study are published or presented, individual names will be used, as will the name of St. Lawrence University.

To minimize the risks to confidentiality during the analysis of data, I will store all data on a password-protected laptop, which will be located in a secure office space. A 3rd party will transcribe the audio recordings into written format and will sign a confidentiality agreement prior to receiving any audio files for this study. Once each interview session has been fully transcribed, checked by you (the participant) for accuracy, and coded, all audio recordings of that interview will be erased.

The sponsor of this study, the University of Vermont, or their appointed designees, as well as the Institutional Review Board and regulatory authorities, will be granted direct access to your original research records for verification of research procedures and/or data.

If your record is used or disseminated for government purposes, it will be done under conditions that will protect your privacy to the fullest extent possible consistent with laws relating to public disclosure of information and the law-enforcement responsibilities of the agency.

Please note that email communication is neither private nor secure. Though we are taking precautions to protect your privacy, you should be aware that information sent through e-mail could be read by a third party.

When the research is completed, all notes of this study will be destroyed.

Contact Information

You may contact Christopher P. Marquart, the Investigator in charge of this study, at Christopher.Marquart@uvm.edu or 315-212-1294 (cell), for more information about this study. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in a research project or for more information on how to proceed should you believe that you have been harmed as a result of your participation in this study you should contact the Director of the Research Protections Office at the University of Vermont at 802-656-5040.

Statement of Consent

You have been given and have read or have had read to you a summary of this research study. Should you have any further questions about the research, you may contact the person conducting the study at the address and telephone number given below. Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty or prejudice.

You agree to participate in this study and you understand that you will receive a signed copy of this form.

Signature of Subject

Date

Name of Subject Printed

<p>This form is valid only if the Committees on Human Research's current stamp of approval is present below.</p>
--

Researcher Signature

Signature of Principal Investigator or Designee

Date

Name of Principal Investigator or Designee Printed

Name of Principal Investigator: Christopher P. Marquart

Address: 7 Maple Street, Canton, NY 13617

Telephone Number: 315-212-1294 (cell)

Name of Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Deborah E. Hunter, Ph.D.

Address: 208 Colchester Avenue, Mann Hall 210C, University of Vermont

Telephone Number: 802-656-2030

Appendix D. Interview Protocol

1. I am going to prompt you with some statements. I am hoping you can paint a picture with words for me of what comes to your mind:
 - a. *St. Lawrence campus in the late 1970's & early 1980's*
 - b. *Student culture during this time. Do you recall any distinct subcultures?*
 - c. *Faculty culture during this time*
 - d. *Administrative culture during this time*
2. What originally drew your interest in working with the "Freshman Program" concept?
 - a. *Why do you believe other faculty had an interest in this idea?*
 - b. *Who else on campus supported this concept? (Students, administrators, etc.)*
3. What was your specific role and/or involvement with the FYP?
 - a. *There were a number of similar pilot programs and tripartite committees – were you involved in any of those? Why?*
4. Do you recall the FYP facing any opposition?
 - a. *If so, from whom?*
 - b. *Can you describe the conflict?*
 - c. *At what point do you recall the FYP being recognized as an integrated part of St. Lawrence's culture?*
 - d. *Why do you think the FYP was ultimately able to stick around and become a sustainable academic program?*
5. Do you feel the FYP has changed the culture of St. Lawrence in any way?
 - a. *If so, how?*
 - b. *How have students been impacted?*
 - c. *How have faculty been impacted?*
 - d. *How have administrators been impacted?*
 - e. *How has it shaped academic and residential life on campus?*
6. If this experience were to start all over again, is there anything you feel should have been done differently? Is there anything you personally would have done differently?
7. Do you have any advice for college leaders, faculty, or staff out there who may be seeking to plan and implement a program for positive organizational change at their institution?

Appendix E. Coding Legend – Research Questions #1 and #2

Category 1: Causational cultural conditions (RQ #1, RQ #2)
Descriptor 1: Institution - Academic Tone Code: [I-AT]
Descriptor 2: Institution – Academic Skills Code: [I-ACAD-SK]
Descriptor 3: Inst. – Academic/Residential Divide Code: [I-DIVIDE]
Descriptor 4: Institution – No Trust in Student Life Code: [I-SL]
Descriptor 4: Institution – Male Dominant Code: [I-T-IX]
Descriptor 5: Subculture – Greek Life Code: [CULT-GRK]
Descriptor 6: Subculture – Independents Code: [CULT-GDI]
Descriptor 7: Subculture – “Change” Faculty Code: [CULT-FAC+]
Descriptor 8: Subculture – “Status Quo” Faculty Code: [CULT-FAC-]
Descriptor 9: Subculture – Administration Code: [CULT-ADMIN]
Descriptor 10: Actor –President Code: [PREZ]
Descriptor 11: Actor – Gang of 4 Code: [GANG-4]

Appendix F. Coding Legend – Research Question #3

Category 2: Cultural factors of implementation and development (RQ #3)	
Descriptor 1: Institution – Departmentalism Code: [I-DEPT]	
Descriptor 2: Inst. – Race, Class, and/or Gender Code: [I-RCG]	
Descriptor 3: Institution – Epistemology Code: [I-EPIST]	
Descriptor 4: Institution – Recruitment Tool Code: [I-RECRUIT]	
Descriptor 5: Subculture – Alumni Code: [CULT-ALUM]	
Descriptor 6: Subculture – Changing Students Code: [CULT-STUD-△]	
Descriptor 7: Subculture – “Change” Faculty Code: [CULT-FAC+]	
Descriptor 8: Subculture – “Status Quo” Faculty Code: [CULT-FAC-]	
Descriptor 9: Actor –President(s) x3 Code: [PREZ]	
Descriptor 10: Actor – Richard Guarasci Code: [GUARASCI]	
Descriptor 12: Actor – Grant Cornwell Code: [CORNWELL]	

Appendix G. Coding Legend – Research Question #4

Category 3: Perceived change in institutional culture (RQ #4)
Descriptor 1: Peer-to-Peer Relationships Code: [PEER-REL]
Descriptor 2: Faculty-Student Relationships Code: [FAC-REL]
Descriptor 3: Improved Academic Tone Code: [AT-△]
Descriptor 4: Decline in Greek life Code: [NO-GRK]
Descriptor 5: Created Special Hearing Board Code: [T-IX]
Descriptor 6: Faculty Professional Development Code: [PROF-DEV]
Descriptor 7: Positive Administrative Change Code: [ADMIN-△]
Descriptor 8: Interdisciplinary Code: [INTER-DIS]

Appendix H. New Student Affairs Structure for 1987-88

Dean of Student Affairs

- supervise Student Affairs division
- conduct strategic planning
- coordinate professional staff development

Director of Student Development

- implement St. Lawrence University Student Development Model
- supervise student operational services
- implement student leadership program

Director of Residential Life

- supervise resident directors, house residents, and resident assistants selection, training, and performance
- coordinate student housing
- implement residential programming that integrates academic and residential life

Director of Student Activities

- manage E.J. Noble University Center
- coordinate student and University activity programs
- supervise student organizations

Director of Counseling Services

- manage Counseling Office and Counseling Resource Team
- provide individual and group student counseling
- conduct mental health awareness programs for University community

Director of Career Planning

- implement development programs and services for students in career planning
- develop academic department resources for career planning
- establish alumni involvement in career planning program

Director of Health Center

- manage Winning Health center
- provide health care for students
- conduct health awareness programs for University community

Director of Security & Safety

- supervise Security staff
- implement and enforce University security & safety rules and regulations
- conduct educational programs on University security and safety issues

Director of Athletics

- supervise intercollegiate athletic program
- coordinate intramural and recreational programs for students

Appendix I. FYP Pilot Year Faculty-Staff Roster, 1987-88

FRESHMAN PROGRAM FACULTY/STAFF ROSTER 1987-88

RESIDENTIAL STAFF

CHARLES K. GAINES COLLEGE

Faculty Chair	Joe Kling
Friend of College	Terri Williams,
Programmer	Admissions Office
RA	Stu Baker (student)
RA	Evette Banfield (student)
	Bill Velto (student)

HENRY W. PRIEST COLLEGE

Faculty Chair	Grant Cornwell
Residence	Laurie Booth
Director of Res. Colleges	
Programmer	Don Haviland (student)
RA	C.J. Bryant (student)
RA	Brian Marthage (student)

HARRY REIFF COLLEGE

Faculty Chair	Richard Guarasci
Friend of College	Karen Lee,
Programmer	Development Office
RA	Treavor Lord (student)
RA	Tracey Cross (student)
	Danelle Permenter (student)

COLLEGE FACULTY

ND 187 - Section A

Joe Kling - Government
Robert Schwartz - History
Mike Sheard - Math
Eve Stoddard - English

ND 187 - Section B

Grant Cornwell - Philosophy
Patricia Alden - English
Dave Arnold - Psychology
Stephen Papson - Sociology

ND 187 - Section C

Richard Guarasci - Freshman Program/Government
Tom Coburn - Religious St.
Parker Marden - Sociology
Bob Thacker - Canadian St./English